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A Reformed Weekly

SEPTEMBER 25, 1992/48th year of publication/No. 2322

Thinkbit:

Too many people stop looking for work when they find a job.

Road sign in the upper peninsula of Michigan.

Christian observers say 'Yes' to constitutional package

Photo: C.C. files

The logo for the government's "Consensus Report on the Constitution," completed in Charlottetown on Aug. 28.

Bill Fledderus

OTTAWA — A variety of Christian political observers contacted by *Calvinist Contact* are unanimously in favour of the constitutional amendment package which will be put to a national vote on Oct. 26.

They recommend that their fellow Canadians carefully consider voting Yes in the coming referendum, despite the fact that several prominent groups such as the Reform Party of Canada, the National Action Committee (NAC) on the Status of Women and the Bloc Quebecois are calling for a rejection of the package.

The observers who were contacted say that a perfect deal which could please everyone is impossible, and they recommend the government's proposal as an acceptable set of compromises.

Self interest greatest problem

John Hiemstra, who teaches political science at The King's, agrees. "The current package is the best that can be expected," he says.

But he believes "the referendum is the exact opposite of what the government should have done. Those are our elected representatives at work on the deal. By holding a referendum, the government is allowing all kinds of self-interest groups to tear away at the package like a kind of centrifugal force."

"I see two possible scenarios," says Hiemstra. "If the forces of self-interest and liberal individualism win out, we will see a No vote in several regions across Canada. I'm afraid that is where we are heading."

"But I hope and pray that Canadians will realize that self-interest doesn't work, that the Canadian tradition of compromise is a good one," and that they will vote "Yes."

See **OBSERVERS** -- p. 2...

Secret network puts black-on-black South African violence in new light

Marian Van Til

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Black South African leaders have long insisted that a secret network which they have dubbed the "Third Force" is sabotaging their country's move toward black majority rule. But now a white former intelligence officer has admitted to having been a member of such a group and has revealed to what extent South Africa has been — and still is — in its grip.

In a recent interview with the *Christian Science Monitor*, Gert Hugo, a retired colonel in the Department of Military Intelligence of the South African Defense Force (SADF), asserted that the Third Force has "intimidated and assassinated anti-apartheid activists and fomented black-on-black violence."

While civil rights workers and human rights lawyers have been attempting to collect such evidence, Hugo is the most senior official to come forward to document a dark and vast network of abuse and murder.

Hugo told John Battersby of *The Monitor*:

* Some military and covert-operations units were engaged in "destabilization" during former President Botha's administration and are now "waging an internal war against those they deem South Africa's enemies, especially the African National Congress (ANC) and its supporters."

* Top-level military officers control the network which is an outgrowth of the security forces which under Botha "effectively ran the country through an inner cabinet called the State Security Council."

* The network's goal is to see that South African power remains in white hands, even if or when the black majority becomes the government majority.

Government protection for assassins

The Third Force began in the 1980s as the black fight against apartheid gained momentum, Hugo told *The Monitor*. The State Security Council protected the Department of Military Intelligence and the SADF's Special Forces while they "mounted hit-and-run and assassination operations in South Africa's black-ruled neighbouring countries to sabotage the ANC and those who supported it."

As those operations caused black unrest to spread, similar tactics carried out by state-sanctioned covert units were used to undermine the political resistance to apartheid, says Hugo. Though all this was done with the

See **THIRD** -- p. 5

Sunflowers, heavy with seed, ready to die

Photo: Alma Barkman, Winnipeg, Man.

I Peter 1: 24, 25: "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever."

In this issue:

What happened in the Garden of Eden and how do we view the consequences? Bert Witvoet ponders "The choice between two lovely trees" . . . . . pp. 10-11
"Enchanted April" is an enchanting film well worth seeing, says Marian Van Til. . . . . p. 7
Who carved the massive stone figures on Easter Island, and what happened to that island's inhabitants? p.12

News

Observers vote Yes

...continued from p. 1

In response to Preston Manning's calls for a moratorium on constitutional negotiations, Hiemstra says, "A person is in a fool's paradise if he believes that putting the whole thing on hold will solve anything."

Certain problems and tensions have come to a point where we have to alleviate them by changing the rules about how we live together. Specifically, I believe the Native question and the French-Canadian question need to be addressed now," he says.

"The intent of the package is to allow us to live together. A lot of interest groups have come forward to say, 'This package doesn't solve my problems.' But it doesn't have to solve every problem facing Canada today. It has to create a framework in which we can live together and work at those problems together."

David Koyzis agrees that putting the Constitution on hold is "unrealistic" and "doesn't make a lot of sense." Koyzis is an assistant professor of political science at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.

"When Manning advocates such policies it makes you wonder if he has any conception of how people feel in Quebec," says Koyzis. Koyzis believes the constitutional issue should be settled soon, before more damage is done.

Jane Evans of Ottawa agrees with Koyzis, though she stresses she is speaking personally and not as a representative of Women Alive, the organization she works with. She says she will probably vote Yes. "Right now I feel like 'Let's just get it all over with,'" she says.

Evans points out that we also need to keep this crisis in perspective. Canadians need to pray for their country, she says, and trust that God is sovereign in this area of life as well. "I don't think we have learned to pray for our country the way we should."

Incompleteness 'a good thing'

Preston Manning has also complained that 34 areas of the proposed constitutional agreement will require additional agreement.

"I would have a problem with the package if it did not require further negotiations," says Janet Buckingham, the director of Christian Legal Fellowship in London, Ont. "When you make a huge step such as agreeing in principle to Native self-government, you cannot expect a concrete proposal in a few short months."

"Few of the opponents I have heard have raised major problems with the package. They are merely trying to take advantage of the general unease many Canadians feel" about the constitutional amendments, she says.

"The proposed package is a workable deal. I really believe a Yes vote is a vote for the future of Canada," she says.

"A country that demands a constitutional package with all its t's crossed and its i's dotted is misguided," says David Long, an assistant professor of sociology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Long points out that not all Native Canadians are pleased about the negotiations made by Ovide Mercredi, chief of the Assembly of First Nations. "There are a large number of Native groups which are not part of the Assembly," he says. "They are concerned that politicking is taking precedence over the grassroots concerns on the reserves."

"Most reserves are pretty cut off from what goes on in Ottawa," says Long.

Gender quotas in Senate would be a mistake, say observers

Bill Fledderus

OTTAWA — Requiring that half of the members of a new Senate be women, as Judy Rebick of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has advocated, would be a mistake and would not be doing women a favour, according to a variety of political observers contacted by *Calvinist Contact*. Rebick's group claims to represent 750,000 Canadians.

"It's a short-sighted idea," says Aileen Van Ginkel of Oakville, Ont. Van Ginkel works for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and is also involved with an advocacy group known as the Coalition for Religious Freedom in Education.

"What if only one woman [in a group of Senate candidates] has the necessary qualifications to be a good senator? If we were required to have three, that could lead to two unqualified senators getting elected."

"Or what if the six best qualified candidates were women? Would three be cast aside because of their gender?"

"What's more, it seems to suggest that women senators would only represent women," she adds. "Gender cuts across all political lines."

John Hiemstra, a political science professor at The King's College in Edmonton, agrees with Van Ginkel. "Having quotas in a representative democracy is what you might call a philosophical perversion. Nobody has a right to say to the electorate, 'You must vote this way.'"

Hiemstra argues that feminist groups could do better by forming their own political party and field candidates if they want more women in political office, using the electoral mechanisms which are in place.

Jane Evans also agrees. "I do not believe Senate gender quotas would be doing women a favour. I support women's groups who are looking for good candidates to field, but there needs to be a true democratic process," she says. Evans lives in Ottawa where she works for Women Alive.

Janet Buckingham, the London, Ont., leader of the Christian Legal Fellowship, also disagrees with the quota idea. "It makes the NAC look as if it is antagonistic to the whole system of parliamentary democracy."

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David T. Koyzis

Across the Globe

Christian/Muslim conflict raging in Cyprus too

For two reasons, I have an ongoing interest in what happens on the island nation of Cyprus. First, my father was born there and a number of relatives still live there. Second, the historic ethnic rivalry that has plagued the island seems to have provided, some 30 years before the fact, an eerie foretaste of the kind of conflicts that are fragmenting many of the ex-communist countries after the end of the Cold War.

Cyprus is estimated to contain nearly 700,000 inhabitants, of whom approximately 80 per cent are Greek-speaking and Orthodox Christian and 19 per cent are Turkish-speaking and Muslim. The Turkish Cypriot minority is a remnant of some three centuries of Ottoman rule which came to an end in 1878 when the island passed to Britain. British rule came to an end in 1960 when the island became an independent republic within the Commonwealth of Nations. Britain retains two sovereign naval bases.

Surprising Reformed presence

There is a longstanding Reformed Christian presence on Cyprus in the form of the American Academy, an English-language Christian secondary school once operated by missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America. My father, though raised in an Orthodox family, was educated at this institution and it was by means of this school that he came to the Reformed faith. The number of Reformed Christians on Cyprus remains small, yet the American Academy has exerted an influence on the educated populace beyond what one might expect.

In recent decades we have come to think of Cyprus as a country torn apart by the conflicting aspirations of its Greek and Turkish inhabitants. The guerrilla war of the late 1950s saw the proponents of *enosis*, or union with Greece, pitted against British colonial authorities, Turkish Cypriots and less nationalistic Greek Cypriots. The year 1964 saw renewed intercommunal strife which brought in United Nations peacekeeping forces. (Canadians who have served in the military are quite likely to have seen "action" as part of this contingent in an otherwise pleasant tourist paradise.)

The island was geographically partitioned between the two ethnic communities in 1974 when an Athens-sponsored *coup* attempt against the government of then-president Makarios led to Ankara's military intervention and occupation of the northern third of the island. Although Turkey's action was universally condemned at the time, its troops remain in control of this territory which now goes by the name of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The U.N. has repeatedly called on Turkey to withdraw from the region, with little effect.

Not an inevitable conflict

Cyprus has indeed seen conflict between the two communities. But this is not the whole story. Many Greek and Turkish Cypriots over a certain age tell of another time when members of the two communities mixed rather easily in both social and economic realms. My own father grew up speaking both Greek and Turkish, and he reports having had Turkish Cypriot playmates.

My point is not that intercommunal relations were completely equitable or that a Cypriot "golden age" existed prior to the 1950s. But the polarization of Greeks and Turks into separate warring communities was hardly an inevitable development. It was the result of a deliberate act of will on the part of the adherents of Greek and Turkish nationalisms, each of which found no place for members of the other community. Unfortunately these nationalists were the educated elite, the molders of opinion within their respective communities. Ironically, although education is generally assumed to exert a cosmopolitan influence, in this case it has led to a deadly narrowing of vision — which is a typical consequence of following an idolatrous worldview.

David T. Koyzis is assistant professor of political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

Pressreview

Carl Tuyl's column this week was postmarked Salzburg, Austria.

The dollar down, the Blue Jays up, so I heard from two American tourists who had listened to the Armed Forces Radio Network. And that's about all the Canadian news I have. Now if you want Dutch or German news, I can give you more than my allotted space in *Calvinist Contact*. Let's do the Dutch first.

★★★

Students who cannot find places in Dutch universities are now enrolling in Belgium. Belgian universities accept all students from EEC countries.

The Dutch are the freight-forwarders of Europe. Dutch trucks are part of the Autobahn scene, and at the Polish border they were lined up as far as one can see.

The *Algemeen Dagblad* complains about high taxes; of all EEC citizens, the Dutch pay the highest taxes.

The annual flower show in Aalsmeer drew one million spectators this year, in spite of the heavy rain.

Wounded Bosnian soldiers who were hospitalized in Roermond do not want to return to their country. They like it in Holland.

★★★

Four prisoners escaped from a penitentiary in Rotterdam: one Irish, one Turkish, one Moroccan, one Dutch. the prisons reflect the cosmopolitan population of the country. Where else than in a Dutch newspaper can you read Winnie Mandela's letters to an alleged lover? But Winnie complains that her lover took too much money from her account.

★★★

Good news for Groningers: a historian has found the first Groninger dictionary. The book was written in 1850 by a Reverend Boeles. It counts 4,000 entrees. Two other such dictionaries were published in 1890 and 1929.

★★★

As in many other countries, the Dutch health care delivery system is getting more expensive, and legislators are discussing methods to economize.

Dutch volleyball players, who keep losing, say that the reason for their poor performances is their low pay. They want more money.

One thousand, yes 1,000, drummers played a concert in Rotterdam. Must have sounded like thunder.

★★★

The government was deliberating about checking on people who receive welfare but drive automobiles. The socialistic Party of Labour finds this unacceptable. The reaction of that leftish party was called "a mixture of unbelief and astonishment."

★★★

Now over to the *Berliner Morgenpost* and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*:

Let me tell you first of all that the former East Germany is a country under construction. Service stations and roads are most prominent among construction sites. The Trabant, East Germany's contribution to last century's automobile technology, is still very much visible. Road construction at places causes traffic jams that add hours to travelling time.

★★★

Re-unification has brought eastern Germans, "Ossis" as they are called, inflation and unemployment. *Der Spiegel*, Germany's popular weekly magazine spoke of "Deutsche gegen Deutsche," Germans against Germans. The cover article described the animosity between "Ossis" and "Westis." Eastern Germans are generally disturbed about the imprisonment of their former chief of state, Honecker. One writer commented that the Westis have never been so diligent in prosecuting former Nazis.

★★★

The Bremen library has started to return property which the Nazis stole from Jewish people. The library is searching for heirs.

Divorce procedures in Germany have been simplified, but alimony assigned by the courts can run into quite some money.

Short-term investment of money is producing 9.01 per cent interest. No wonder the German Mark is gaining against North American currency.

★★★

The *Berliner Morgenpost* predicts that hurricane Andrew will blow President Bush out of office. The paper's Washington correspondent writes that in Florida, 400,000 people are still without electricity and another 100,000 remain homeless. *Berliner Morgenpost* also doesn't think much about Billy Graham's statement that the catastrophe is a blessing in disguise because it allows for a new beginning. Did he really say that?

★★★

Racist political parties such as Deutsche Alternative, the National Front, and the Freedom Labour Party are gaining in membership. In Frankfurt am Oder, the state prosecutor demanded five-year prison terms for skinheads who had caused a race riot.

★★★

At the former Checkpoint Charlie they're selling small pieces of the wall for 2 D.M. Business is brisk. My son, ever inventive, took a hammer and beat out a chunk for himself. "Saved 2 D.M.," he said. About where Hitler's bunker used to be, vendors are now selling Russian army equipment and small Trabant models.

Beer in Germany is cheaper than coffee.

★★★

People are reluctant to speak about the Nazi regime and its atrocities. I visited the site of the camp where I was the guest of the blond brutes. I am still sorting out my feelings.

★★★

I'm writing this column in Salzburg, Mozart's hometown. A real tourist trap where, if they could, they would charge for the air you breathe. My son's comment so far is that Dutch women are much better looking than German and Polish maidens.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church.

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- *reports on significant happenings in the Christian community and in the world,*
- *expresses opinions that are infused by Scripture and Spirit and rooted in a Reformed perspective,*
- *provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.*

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Office hours: 8:15 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Editor: Bert Witvoet
General Manager: Stan de Jong
Associate Editor: Marian Van Til
Assistant Editor: Robert VanderVennen
Staff Journalist: William Fledderus
Correspondents:
Kathy Vanee: Mt. Lehman, B.C.; **Thea Ewald:** Smithers, B.C.; **Margaret Van Ginhoven:** Edmonton, Alta.; **Hermina Dykxhoorn:** Calgary, Alta.; **Angela Terpstra:** Regina, Sask.; **Jeanet Sybenga:** Winnipeg, Man.; **Gertrude van Leeuwen:** Winnipeg, Man.; **Andy Oudman:** London, Ont.; **Nandy Heule:** St. Catharines, Ont.; **Stan de Jong:** St. Catharines, Ont.; **Reinder Klein:** Woodbridge, Ont.; **Walter Neutel:** Ottawa, Ont.; **Barend Biesheuvel:** Pierrefonds, Que.; **Anne Hutten:** Kentville, N.S.; **Alison de Groot:** Washington, D.C.
Accounting: Corrie de Jong
Advertising: Suzanna Brasz
Circulation & Mailing: Grace Bowman
Layout & Design: Cecilia van Wylick
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Editorial Advisory Board:
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Canada is hanging by a fine thread spun in Charlottetown on August 28

I have read through the Consensus Report on the Constitution agreed upon by the first ministers of Canada in Charlottetown on August 28 this year. This is the agreement that Canadians are asked to say Yes or No to on October 26. There is too much in the report for me to comment on all sections. I will limit myself to only a few observations.

The Canada Clause is somewhat of a disappointment, though it sets forth a number of important commitments. It reads like a technical document that sets out the rights of the Aboriginal peoples, Quebec as a distinct society and the equality of female and male persons, to name but a few items.

It does not reflect the work done by Christians earlier this year (see our May 8, 1992, issue). There are no references to principles of "compassion, respect for life, responsibility, stewardship and justice." The preamble which several religious leaders had sweated over and that eloquently spoke of "the supremacy of God and the dignity of each person, the importance of family and the value of community" is nowhere in sight.

The Canada Clause is clearly a product of politicians preoccupied with powers and rights rather than with vision and principles. And since God has not threatened to withold rain, the only language politicians understand, it will probably remain as is.

National women's committee seeks joyless revolution

Since the Canada Clause is supposed to "guide the courts in their future interpretation of the entire Constitution" it is definitely a step forward for women in their struggle for equality. It reads that "Canadians are committed to the equality of female and male persons."

One wonders why the National Action Committee on the Status of Women feels it necessary, nevertheless, to vote down this agreement. The NAC insists that half of all Senate seats be set aside for women.Theirs is the kind of affirmative action that will interfere with both the selection of suitable candidates and free election by voters. It's good to see that several women MPs are speaking up against this notion.

How far must we go in forcing our society to implement the principle of the equality of women and men? If the answer is "all the way," we may as well insist on a prescribed ratio for all groups that have been discriminated against: blacks, Asians, handicapped, homosexuals, Muslims, Christians, the poor.

Sometimes affirmative action is desirable, as long as it does not unduly threaten the fabric of a society. Certainly all forms of affirmative action should be temporary, not enshrined in such a permanent document as the Constitution. Somewhere along the line of cultural development, you have to trust the spirit of your cause rather than the letter of the law to win your battles for you.

Leaders of the NAC represent the modern version of joyless revolutionaries who would shape society according to their own ideals, whether that society likes it or not. Seventy years of communism should have taught us the futility of that.

Triple-E did not escape Bourassa's knife

We can understand why those Canadians who were looking for a Triple-E Senate are not altogether satisfied.

The proposed 62-seat Senate is **equal** to the extent that six senators are to come from each province and one senator from each territory. It's **elected** only for those provinces that want it that way since the choice is between having senators elected by the population or by members of legislative assemblies of the provinces and territories.

How **effective** is the proposed Senate? This is not entirely clear. Certainly, its powers are curtailed by the fact that a simple majority at joint sittings of the House of Commons and the Senate would determine the outcome of "ordinary legislation" which had previously been defeated or amended by the Senate. When one combines that scenario with the idea that the most populous provinces control the majority of seats in the House of Commons (Quebec is assured of 25 per cent of the seats), then even the idea of an **equal** Senate is not as appealing anymore.

A rough and unfinished document

The Consensus Report on the Constitution is filled with statements that indicate that a lot of work must be done in the future. Preston Manning is right in saying that accepting the agreement is only the beginning of many years of further wrangling. Quebec separatists predict that there will be court challenges on 55 clauses in the new accord.

However, the fact that the accord is unfinished and imperfect should not be a reason for voting against it. Starting from scratch once again would not make things easier in the future.

It appears that Manning sees all attempts to satisfy Quebec as giving in to separatism or leading to eventual separation. And he has no appreciation of how fragile our confederation is.

A responsible debate?

The federal government is going to try selling the unity package by engaging stars like Wayne Gretzky, Roberta Bondar, Silken Lauman and Mario Lemieux. These wonderful people will be appearing in ads in which they will urge the voters to say Yes in the upcoming referendum.

But, one may ask, what qualities do these people possess to lead Canadians into a thoughtful consideration of the unity package? Have they even glanced at the text of the August 28 accord? What kind of political insights do they bring to the job of recommending that we vote Yes?

This sort of thing tends to make thoughtful Canadians cynical about the whole business of having a referendum in the first place. Do we need to be manipulated by images of success and heroics to vote responsibly?

It's our last chance to stay together

In spite of all the flaws that one can find in the August 28 accord, it seems to be the best we as a nation can produce. We hope that it will be accepted unanimously right across the country.

Ninety-one-year-old Bruce Hutchinson, one of Canada's most respected journalists, who passed away on September 16, warned Canadians on CBC's "The Journal" that if this accord did not succeed, Canada would not and could not stay together. It would end up as part of the US.

"Canada was destined to be a unique country," he added. "To break up a treasure like Canada is sheer lunacy."

BW

Letter

Marriage Encounter: overcoming the fear of condemnation

I liked the articles on "Marriage Encounter" by Nandy Heule (C.C. Sept. 4). Reading through it I went back in my mind to the '70s and '80s when I used to write many similar paragraphs promoting Marriage Encounter, in the newsletter of Salem Christian Mental Health Association and in *Calvinist Contact*. Frequent publicity was and still is needed to help couples overcome their reluctance and trepidation about attending such a weekend.

As past president of Salem (1960-1982) I want to correct the statement that the first Reformed encounter weekend in Canada took place in the fall of 1989.

In the late '60s Marriage Encounter had spread from the U.S. to Montreal and Hamilton, where sessions were held under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church, with a distinct Christian character. When Salem decided to enter this field, we joined the Marriage Encounter movement, then based in Englewood, N.J. Four lead couples went for the proper training, the approach was revised to reflect our Christian vision, and Salem then became the first organization to offer Reformed Marriage Encounter in Canada. This was 1971!

Up until 1988 an average of four weekends were held each year. We once organized an encounter for ministers and their spouses, held during the week, with 16 couples attending.

We faced two difficulties, that don't seem to exist any longer, but which made it necessary for us to change the name of these weekends to "Marriage Enrichment Conferences."

First, in the '70s the word "encounter" had a bad ring to many Christians and to others. They had heard of encounter groups where nudity and other lifestyles from the '60s were practised. As a Christian organization we had to take that into account.

Second, the whole area of psychology and emotional distress was still so frightening to many people that all they could do was reject and condemn it. As a result, couples were then much more afraid to be seen at such a weekend than they would be today. It could mean the cold shoulder from family or friends because, "their marriage was bad." It could even cost some their position as an elder in the church.

The best can improve

By emphasizing the element of enrichment in our name we hoped to overcome these two obstacles and avoid condemnation. After all, even the best can stand improvement, and certainly enrichment. Understandably, the change in name did not alter the work we were doing.

My thoughts go to the lead couples who for 17 years gave so much of their time, effort and private selves in order to help others. I am glad that a new group of leaders has taken on this challenge; may God give them the wisdom and love they will need.

I also will always admire those hundreds of couples who put their fears aside and passed through Salem's Marriage Encounter. Those couples had obviously decided that healing and growth in their marriages was more important than possible condemnation. May many more follow their example.

Alan Vandermaas, M.D.
St. Catharines, Ont.

Beyond Belief

THAT CHRISTIAN COACH OVER AT LAKEDALE HAS BEEN BROUGHT UP ON A MORALS CHARGE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE WOULD HAVE AN AFFAIR WITH A STUDENT.
I SAID MORALS. HE INTRODUCED THE SUBJECT OF MORALS DURING A LECTURE ON SPORTSMANSHIP.
HAS THE MAN NO SHAME?

News

Third Force is still powerful in South Africa

... continued from p. 1

knowledge and tacit approval of the state, no political leader was ever implicated because the Third Force had "built in mechanisms" to keep itself at arm's length from those politicians.

Under a state of emergency which began in mid-1986 there was a strategy called "Total War," during which the covert units were "cut off from their sources of intelligence [and oversight] and were told they must identify and act against political targets. There was less and less accountability and now it is out of control," Hugo asserts.

Irrefutible proof

The Monitor says that Hugo's claim is backed up by a Jan. 17, 1991, secret military document the paper was able to acquire. The document is "a classic plan of action against an 'enemy.' The recent date it bears was "a year after President De Klerk legalized the ANC, freed Nelson Mandela and set the country on a peaceful path away from apartheid," notes *The Monitor*.

What is most chilling is that Colonel Hugo and this document attest to the fact that the Third Force is still alive and well and powerful in South Africa. The introduction to the document states: "Despite the government's reform initiatives, which are part of the political strategy en route to the so-called 'New South Africa,' elements or forces continue to threaten good order and the welfare of RSA [the Republic of South Africa] by means of violence, intimidation, and socioecomonic retrogression in order to pressurize the government."

The document then presents its plan to quell that perceived threat, including countering the ANC through military operations and through developing what it calls "own forces" and "force multipliers" — "surrogate" black groups that the SADF can rely on to do its bidding against other black groups.

Terrorists disguised as church educators

One of the most insidious parts of the plan was the setting up of recruiting, training and arms sessions disguised as church adult education programs for the surrogate black groups.

The Monitor says recent reports about "one key South African military intelligence official support Hugo's claim that the so-called Third Force has supporters at the military establishment's highest levels." One of those key officials, Gen. Christoffel van der Westhuizen, has been at the centre of controversy since last May when an anti-apartheid newspaper printed a 1985 document signed by van der Westhuizen which requested authorization from Botha's State Security Council for "permanent removal from society" of anti-apartheid activist Matthew Goniwe and two colleagues.

Three weeks later Goniwe and three others were found dead in the bush near their wrecked car. Just last month De Klerk ordered police to "spare no effort" in hunting down Goniwe's killer. An inquiry is investigating the matter and there are rumours of van der Westhuizen's "imminent dismissal." Hugo, reports *The Monitor*, says that De Klerk "has been unable to act against van der Westhuizen because a broader scandal might ensue.

FROM COAST TO COAST

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford-CFVR	7:30 am	850
Burns Lake-CFLD	9:15am	1400
Kitimat-CKTK	8:30 am	1230
Osoyoos-CKOO	8:30am	1490
Penticton-CKOK	8:30am	800
Port Alberni-CJAV	10:30 am	1240
Prince George-CIBC	8:30am	94.3
Princeton-CKRP	8:30am	1460
Smithers-CFBV	9:15am	1230
Summerland-CKSP	8:30am	1450
Vancouver-CJVB	9:00am	1470
Vernon-CJIB	9:30pm	940

ALBERTA

Brooks-CKBR	8:00 am	1340
Edmonton-CHQT	7:30am	880
Edson-CJYR	10:00am	970
Ft. McMurray-CJOK	9:00 am	1230
St. Albert-CHMG	7:00 am	1200
Taber-CKTA	8:00am	1570

MANITOBA

Altona-CFAM	9:30am	950
Steinbach-CHSM	9:30am	1250
Winnipeg-CKJS	9:15am	810

NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton-CFNB	6:30am	550
Newcastle-CFAN	9:00am	790
Saint John-CHSJ	9:00am	700

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown-CFCY	7:00am	630

QUEBEC

Montreal-CFQR(fm)	7:30am	92.5

NOVA SCOTIA

Digby-CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Kentville-CKEN	8:30am	1490
Middleton-CKAD	8:30am	1350
New Glasgow-CKEC	7:30am	1320
Sydney-CJCB	8:00am	1270
Weymouth-CKDY	8:30am	103.1
Windsor-CFAB	8:30am	1450

ONTARIO

Ajax-CHOO	9:30am	1390
Atikokan-CFAK	10:30am	1240
Burlington-CING(fm)	7:00 pm	107.9
Chatham-CFCO	9:30pm	630
Guelph-CJOY	9:00pm	1460
Hamilton-CHAM	7:30am	820
Kapuskasing-CKAP	9:00am	580
Kingston-CFMK	10:00am	96.3
Newmarket-CKAN	8:00am	1480
Oshawa-CKAR	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound-CFOS	10:30am	560
Pembroke-CHRO (Sat.)	6:30pm	1350
Pembroke-CHRO	10:00am	1350
Sit. Ste. Marie-CFYN	10:00am	1050
St. Catharines-CKTB	8:00 pm	610
Sarnia-CHOK	7:30am	1070
Stratford-CJCS	8:45am	1240
Windsor-CKLW	9:00am	800
Wingham-CKNX	10:30am	920
Woodstock-CKDK(fm)	8:00am	102.3

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Language barrier broken by hi-tech communications system

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — A nine-year-old boy, newly arrived from Korea, was lost in downtown Toronto. He could not speak English but he was, however, aware that by dialing 9-1-1 he could reach emergency services. So he went into a nearby telephone booth.

The call taker, who could neither understand nor identify the call as being in Korean, immediately dialed a number in Monterey, Calif. The boy's language was quickly identified and a Korean interpreter rushed to the telephone. Within minutes, a three-way conversation pinpointed the boy's precise location, and a police officer was rushed to help the boy.

This is but one of hundreds of stories Inspector Bill Holdridge of the Metropolitan Police Force can tell you about Language Line Service and the way it's helping newcomers who speak neither English nor French in a variety of emergency situations. And, through the miracle of modern electronic science, that help is available in 140 languages. The service is also working for 17 other Canadian organizations, including more police forces, hospitals, hotels and a public transit system.

Holdridge, who heads the communications support bureau of the Metro Toronto police says that since the Language Line Service was officially established last November, more than 1,800 calls have been received and acted upon. The calls have been in 44 languages, from Albanian to Vietnamese. In descending order, the largest number have been in Chinese, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Vietnamese and Polish.

Establishes good relations too

"The main problem facing police and other vital services in cities with ethnically diverse populations is the language barrier," says Holdridge. "This new service not only breaks down that barrier in an emergency but helps establish good relations between the police and the community in the longer term."

"For instance, one of our officers entered a store because the proprietor had said a man was causing a disturbance in a language he couldn't understand. But by calling police headquarters and getting linked by telephone to Language Line Service, he was quickly able to find out that the man was no disturber of the peace; he was suffering from severe abdominal pains and needed to be rushed to a hospital.

Language Line Services is owned by the telecommunications giant AT&T and based in Monterey, Calif. From that location, qualified personnel provide interpretation and translation in 140 different languages. When a client such as the Metro Toronto Police phones Language Line Services, an interpreter comes on line within moments. These interpreters undergo special training to understand nuances of language and culture. Their training is screened by linguistic experts.

Language Line Services was started in the early 1980s in San Jose, Calif. Following the Vietnam War, nearly 65,000 Southeast Asian refugees migrated to the San Jose area. Language and cultural barriers quickly proved to be significant problems — for both the new arrivals and local officials.

From U.S. to across Canada

A San Jose police officer and an ex-U.S. Marine Corps interpreter devised a telephone-based interpretation service that put police officers in touch with a trained interpreter when they encountered Vietnamese-speaking individuals. While providing this volunteer program, the two founders discovered groups in San Jose speaking 41 other languages — all experiencing similar problems in communicating with police and other emergency service providers. They launched Communication and Language Line, Inc. in 1984. In 1989, the business was acquired by AT&T.

As well as the Metro Toronto force, the police forces of Peel, Durham and Halton in Ontario and in the cities of Calgary and Edmonton, have latched on to the service. The latest public service to join is the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) whose buses, streetcars and subway trains cover a total of 6.1 thousand kilometres of route. The commission, on a six-month trial basis, has announced that Language Line Service is available to give multilingual information on TTC routes, timetables and facilities to persons who dial 393-INFO.

Quite apart from a constantly growing multi-ethnic population, Toronto has become a city that attracts many tourists as well as people visiting immigrant friends and relatives. Many of them will undoubtedly feel more comfortable getting transportation information in their own language.

Inspector Holdridge, who's a great champion of the service, does however offer one word of warning. "We want everybody to be aware of this service but ask them not to play with it," he says. "Please don't make idle calls to find out whether the system works. We *know* it works and so do hundreds of citizens who have been helped. When seconds count, the difference between an available line and an occupied one could mean the difference between life and death."

Look for Peter & Marja on page 16.

Marian den Boer

Like the Lilies

On becoming 40

As my 40th birthday approached, I discerned this milestone would make it next to impossible to continue identifying with the 24-year-old I once was. This is probably why I wanted to keep the event low-key, maybe even ignore it. Of course my husband, Marty, who would be 39 years old for another six months, thought we should celebrate with a big party.

I said no. "Why go through all that fuss and bother to have people come and acknowledge my middle age?" This superior reasoning killed the party idea.

Photo: courtesy Marian Den Boer

Marian Den Boer the day she turned 40

Marty didn't mention it again. Although he did wonder out loud about having a few people over.

"Let's have a party when *you* turn 40," I bargained. Marty agreed and not another word was said.

Nevertheless, on the eve of my birthday, a few people showed up. Actually the living room was crowded. It looked suspiciously like a party. The guests brought wise-cracking birthday cards and a cake with candles that wouldn't blow out; and some guests even dressed in appropriately out-dated fashion. We had a wonderful time.

The next morning, the morning of my birthday, I found the red maple on the front lawn decorated with balloons and toilet tissue courtesy of thoughtful neighbours. They also planted a sign announcing, "She's 40." So much for ignoring the event.

Additional celebrations included visits from both sets of parents. Marty's parents stayed the weekend to watch the metamorphosis take place and my parents came on the actual birthday to have a look at their middle-aged daughter.

My friend in British Columbia sent a box of *Old Dutch* potato chips, Marty gave me a button that said, "Speak up, I'm 40," and the kids presented a booklet called, "I'd rather be 40 than pregnant." I think it was a hint.

Now that the merry-making is over I'm having a difficult time forgetting my age. As suspected, I no longer identify with the younger set. I see myself as the person my mother used to be.

I'll just have to take the advice of the teacher in Ecclesiastes: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven .... There is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live" (Eccl. 3: 1, 12).

Marian den Boer is a homemaker and free-lance writer/editor who lives with her husband and five children in Hamilton, Ont.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Enchanted April

Rated PG
Stars Joan Plowright, Miranda Richardson, Polly Walker, Josie Lawrence, Alfred Molina, Jim Broadbent. Screenplay by Peter Banes; directed by Mike Newell.

Joan Plowright as Mrs. Fisher.

Enchanted April provides an enchanting evening at the theatre. Its charming and witty screenplay is based on a little known 1935 film of the same name which starred Ann Harding. The story is set in post-World-War-I Europe — first in England, then in Italy.

Lottie Wilkens (Josie Lawrence) is a talkative, lonely woman whose solicitor husband, Melarsh, is condescending and demanding, and who sees his wife as a convenient, socially advantageous extension of himself.

On an impulse, after noticing a newspaper ad advertising the one-month rental of an Italian castle (and without consulting Melarsh), Lottie asks Rose Abuthnot (Miranda Richardson), a woman she knows from church, to go in on the rental with her.

Rose is a brooding but deeply religious woman. Her husband, Frederick (Jim Broadbent), who writes seamy harlequin romances under another name, is a superficial philanderer. Rose sums up her remorse at his occupation by saying, "No one should ever write a book God wouldn't like to read."

Looking for sanctuary

Both women feel the need to heal their tattered feelings and build their fragile self-esteem. When they decide their holiday would be more affordable shared with several other women, they set out to find two more renters: Lady Caroline Dester is a beautiful woman who is truly weary of her beauty and the constant, groping attentions of her high class suitors. Mrs. Fisher (Joan Plowright), a crusty old widow who knew Byron, Browning and other Romantic poets, wants "to sit in the shade and remember better times — and better men."

What is so satisfying about this off-handed film is that it provides tiny surprises from beginning to end. It seems to deliberately introduce characters in a stereotypical manner, only to peel away those stereotypes at every turn. Lottie Wilkens, for instance, turns out not to be the flighty woman we expect; in fact, she demonstrates a kind of spiritual insight, continually seeing things the others don't, and she becomes the anchor of the group. And all the others, men and women, eventually defy pigeonholes.

In a sense, this is a kind of fairy tale. The Italian castle nestled between the serene sea and a beautiful wisteria-filled countryside becomes a retreat in the best sense of the word, working its magic on its inhabitants.

Savouring the unexpected

Hardly have the four women met at the castle when Lottie feels that she must share its beauty and her becalmed attitude with her insensitive husband. Her invitation to him to join them does not go over well at first, and we as viewers get ready for a showdown once the lout arrives. But the showdown never happens, and Melarsh Wilkens turns out not to be a lout (or maybe he was and changes). One by one, the men in the lives of the other women drop by, relationships are mended and good humour prevails.

But all this restoration of bodies, minds and spirits happens subtly, with a kind of sneaky gentleness, so that one's reaction is a kind of, "Ah..., this feels right and true; this is the way things were intended to be," rather than, "this is fantasy; it's nice but it could never happen."

If you don't live in or near a city where this little gem is playing (it's not bound to be a mass-distributed box office success), look for it when it comes out on video. It provides a respite all its own.

Poll: most Americans say TV is bad for the family

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (EP) — Nearly two-thirds of American adults say television has a negative effect on the family. And more than that believe TV is a bad influence on children.

Almost as many believe the quality of television programming has gone downhill in the last year, and more than half say they are more frequently offended by TV programs now than they were just a year ago.

The net result? Seventy-one per cent say that objectionable programming content influences them to watch less television.

These findings are from the Family Channel's latest annual Gallup survey of America's TV viewing habits, conducted this spring by the Gallup Organization.

The survey results come at a time when family values are a red-hot issue in the U.S. — especially among political candidates in this presidential election year.

"The findings dramatically underscore the discontent of viewers of TV programs, a discontent which appears to be growing," says George Gallup Jr., president of the Gallup Organization. "Two-thirds of the populace say TV programs are portraying negative values, while comparable percentages give low marks to TV programming in terms of representing personal and family values."

Those who say they're watching less TV blame the current levels of preoccupation with sex, excessive violence, cursing and foul language and vulgarity. Of the total number of people who say they are ever offended by TV shows, the largest number (46 per cent) point to sexual suggestiveness (24 per cent) and violence (22 per cent) as the chief cause of their disapprobation. These are followed by cursing and foul language (14 per cent), and vulgarity (3 per cent). Another 6 per cent complained of racism on TV.

Restricted viewing

Viewers who contend that TV has a negative effect on the family comprise 64 per cent of those surveyed, representing nearly 117 million American adults. The percentage of those who claim TV is a negative impact on children is even higher, at 69 per cent. As a result, 64 per cent of the parents interviewed report that they frequently or occasionally restrict their children's TV viewing due to offensive content. The corresponding figure for 1991's survey was 60 per cent. By contrast, only 19 per cent say they never curtail what their youngsters watch. Last year, 23 per cent of the parents said they never restricted their children's viewing.

Only 5 per cent of the respondents report that television programs represent them "very well." By contrast, 60 per cent say "not too well" or "not at all." "The survey results convey a powerful message to those involved in developing TV programs," Gallup said. The message, he added, is to "put more emphasis on positive values and present a truer picture of personal and family values."

The poll, which included broadcast and cable viewers, shows that people in upper income brackets and college-educated are those most likely to report that television does not reflect their own personal values. This includes university graduates (77 per cent), those with incomes of $50,000 or more (77 per cent), and adults in professional or managerial occupations (75 per cent). A similar percentage of college graduates and high-income ($50,000 +) adults also are among those most likely to feel that TV portrays negative values and that it does a poor job of representing overall family values.

Gallup spoke of the increasing number of television channels being made available by cable systems and pointed to the potential problems involved if the matter of values is not addressed.

"If the public's wishes are kept in mind when new channels are offered through the cable system, programs can be developed which can inform, uplift and energize the populace," he said. "If the public's wishes are ignored, there is a potential danger that television programming could degrade and demoralize the populace."

Operetta theatre announces its 1992-93 season

(Canadian Scene) — When the Toronto Operetta Theatre's second major production of the 1992-93 season opens on December 28 at the Winter Garden Theatre, Canadian tenor Mark DuBois will step into a new role. The well-known singer of opera and operetta will appear in front of the stage instead of behind the footlights. Instead of singing in a leading role, he will make his debut as an orchestra conductor. The production will be Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne*, directed by the theatre's founder, Guillermo Silva-Marin and starring Norine Burgess, Blaine Hendsbee and Henry Ingram and Shari Saunders.

The season, Toronto Operetta Theatre's eighth, opens at the Jane Mallett Theatre on October 14 for four performances of Carl Zeller's *The Bird Seller (Der Vogelhandler)* with Canadian soprano Nancy Hariston who sings with the Nurnberg Opera, Silva-Marin, Lorna MacDonald, Keith Boldt and Robert Grenier.

Toronto Operetta Theatre's popular Sunday matinee concerts, *Sundays of Comedy and Romance*, will be expanded to include a second performance on the Saturday evening preceding each matinee. *Strauss, Strauss, Strauss* opens the series at the St. Lawrence Great Hall on October 31 and November 1, 1992. *The French and Spanish Connection* follows on January 30 and 31. Then comes *Make Believe with Jerome Kern*, which will see Dubois return as a singer, on March 6 and 7. The season ends with a tribute to British operetta during the early years of the century, at a date to be announced.

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

U.S. Catholic bishops' letter on women's roles takes conservative tone in new revision

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (EP) — The fourth draft of the U.S. Bishops' pastoral letter on the role of women in the Roman Catholic Church forcefully rejects the ordination of female priests and embraces a very conservative view of the issue, according to a copy of the document obtained unofficially by the church news agency Catholic News Service.

Conservatives in the church had expressed dissatisfaction with earlier drafts, and at a meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops held at the University of Notre Dame in June, conservatives called for a more vigorous defense of current church teaching on such issues as ordination of women, sexual morality and relationships between the sexes.

The document has been under debate for nine years. The first draft called for further discussion on such issues as birth control, abortion and ordination of women. Because of objections from the Vatican and from conservative Catholic leaders, successive drafts of the document have grown increasingly conservative.

The current draft downplays an earlier condemnation of sexism, saying, "To identify sexism as the principal evil at work in this distortion of relationships between men and women would be to analyze the underlying problem too superficially." It also adds a new section criticizing those who insist "upon identical treatment of women and men" and deny "all [gender] differentiation."

While the second and third drafts briefly affirmed the church's opposition to the ordination of women, the new draft vigorously defends the church's position, presenting detailed argument against ordination.

The document is expected to be debated by the full conference of bishops in late November.

Lutherans and Reformed study full communion

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP)- Ecumenical staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ and Reformed Church in America met in Chicago Aug. 17, to make plans for studying recommendations which call for full communion among the four churches.

During the meeting they completed work and study materials and prepared plans for a joint co-ordinating committee to oversee the study of the document, "A Common Calling: The Witness of Our Reformation Churches in North America Today," which included proposals for full communion between the ELCA and the three churches from the Reformed tradition.

Appointment of committee members is expected to take place in November. The first meeting of the new committee is scheduled to be held in January. Recommendations concerning the proposals in "A Common Calling" are expected to go to the churches in 1995.

White and black Lutheran churches to merge in Namibia

WINDHOEK, Namibia (EP) — Namibia's three Lutheran churches, two made up primarily of black members and one of white members, have decided to merge into one Lutheran church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reports.

The decision was made during a June consultation and announced in July in a message by the leaders of the three churches.

The churches are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia and the former German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia.

Leaders of the churches called for practical steps to be taken toward unity at local and national levels. They asked local congregations to show support for the decision by promoting joint services and programs of action that encourage unity. The leaders also resolved to hold joint conferences and consultations, set up joint services and exchange pastors among the three churches.

The move follows last year's decision by the Lutheran World Federation to reinstate the white German Evangelical Lutheran Church as a member of the federation. The federation suspended the church in 1984 "until such time as they reject apartheid publicly and unequivocally move toward unity with other member churches in the area."

The federation lifted the suspension in July 1991 after the church joined with other regional Lutheran churches in an umbrella organization and called on its congregations "to seek ways of new co-operation and fellowship."

'Protestant supermarket' in Australia

SIDNEY, Australia (EP) — Most Australian churchgoers feel very little denominational loyalty, and one in eight has changed denominations in the past five years, according to a national survey conducted by the Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity. Project co-ordinator Peter Kaldor spoke of a "Protestant supermarket where people are willing to cross denominational barriers in search of the 'right' church." Denominational loyalty was most prized by people over age 60, but overall 61 per cent of those surveyed said lifelong membership in a denomination is not important.

Whose side are you on?

CARSON CITY, Nev. (EP) — "God Almighty" ran for office in Nevada's Democratic primary Sept. 1, squaring off against Senator Harry Reid. Nevada law allows candidates to use any name they choose and tax protester Emil Tolotti Jr. said his campaign gave Nevada voters a change to decide "whether they support God and decency or if they support the continuing abomination of a corrupt Congress." Reid was a little surprised to be facing God in a primary battle; a spokesperson said, "We were surprised to learn he was a Democrat." The choice of name put Tolotti atop the alphabetical ballot as "Almighty, God."

Talk about coincidence ...?

CONWAY, Ark. (EP) — *Baptist Press* recently carried a story from Nancy Patterson, a student-to-student worker at the Baptist Student Union at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA).

To get new students talking about themselves, Patterson likes to ask them about their first kiss. When freshman Becki Nicholes joined the group, Patterson popped her standard question.

Becki thought it over, and said she remembered it. "My family was living in Batesville, Arkansas," she said. "I was in church preschool. A boy ran over and kissed me." Not long after that, the Nicholes family moved away from Batesville.

Patterson said, "You were living in Batesville? Going to preschool? And a little boy ran over and kissed you? Becki, I've got someone you just have to meet."

Two weeks earlier, a UCA sophomore named Randy Whiteaker had walked into the Baptist Student Union, met Patterson, and been asked about his first kiss. He said it had been while he was living in Batesville, going to a church preschool. "There was this cute little girl. Somebody dared me to go over and kiss her. I did. That was my first-ever kiss." He said he never saw that cute little girl again; her family must have moved away.

Nancy Patterson, counsellor extraordinaire, knows a miraculous coincidence when she sees one. She arranged for the two to meet. Today, Randy and Becki are married and, once again, live in Batesville, where it all began.

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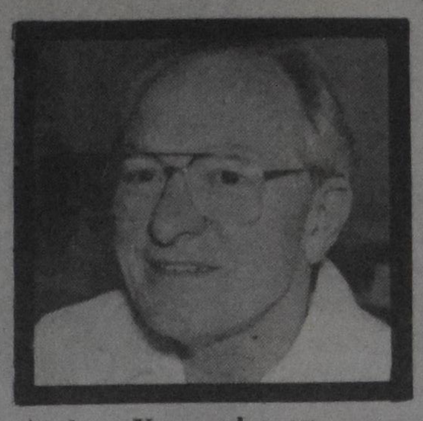


Andrew Kuyvenhoven

No *shalom* for the wicked

Busy Christian people sometimes say, "No rest for the wicked." When they've had a crowded day and the phone jingles as soon as they sit down, they quote that Bible text.

This proverb is found in Isaiah 48: 22 and 57: 21. The New International Version has: "There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked."

This "rest" or "peace" that the wicked are not getting represents the Hebrew word *shalom*. The proverb states an important biblical principle: God's blessing of peace is not for those who continue in sin. Or, to say the same thing positively: peace is based on righteousness.

If you have ever said, "No rest for the wicked," meaning yourself, don't say it again.

Rest, or peace, or shalom is the greatest good God gives to his children. And when the Kingdom of the Messiah has fully come the whole creation will be what it was intended to be. It will be a society that's characterized by safety, reliable order, well-being, prosperity — in one word: *shalom*. But there will be no peace for the wicked.

A spiritual gift

Peace is first of all a spiritual gift. It describes a relationship to God. Sinners cannot meet the holy God and live. But when God says to us as he said to Gideon, "Peace! Do not be afraid, you are not going to die," then we are his friends and our relationship with God is good. "So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it 'The Lord is Shalom'" (Judg. 6: 24).

God has said the same encouraging words to us who, with fear and trembling, trust in the Gospel of peace. Jesus himself experienced not God's peace but God's curse when he hung on the cross. But you and I know that there on Golgotha the prophecy was fulfilled: "The punishment that brought us *shalom* was upon him and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53: 5). Now "we have been justified through faith (and) we have *peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1). But for the wicked, who refuse God's greatest gift, there is no peace.

A societal gift too

However, the *shalom* of the Bible is much more than a spiritual relationship. It is a whole new social and economic order. It's the just society for which every righteous person hungers.

A great picture of that society is presented in Psalm 72, the prayer for David's royal son. This psalm also shows clearly how *shalom* and prosperity are fruits of righteousness. "He will judge your people with righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness" and so on.

This is a psalm worthy to be read and sung frequently. For this is a picture of the Land of Hope and Glory for which we are working and waiting. Our Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9 and 11) leads us there. And the earlier son of David, Solomon ("Shalom!"), also reflected something of the coming order of justice and prosperity: "During Solomon's lifetime Judah and Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, lived in safety, each man under his own vine and fig tree." That's *shalom*!

All of us must be involved in the crusade for justice and prosperity. But we must engage in it with the Christian advantage: we must begin with the restored relationship, the peace that comes from the righteousness of Christ. From that point on we oppose all evil and the evil one, because the wicked will have no peace but the righteous will prosper in the Kingdom of God. "And the God of *shalom* will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:20). He will destroy the old slimy serpent. But under our feet. So, keep fighting. For the righteous shall find rest. But there will be no peace for the wicked.

Andrew Kuyvenhoven is a just-retired pastor of the Christian Reformed Church.

Ordination a Catholic hold-over, says unordained woman pastor

Jacob Kuntz

After the June decision of the Christian Reformed synod encouraging women to use their gifts in the church but refusing them ordination, it was interesting to read in Mennonite Reporter *of June 15, 1992, the story about a woman who became senior pastor in a Mennonite Brethren congregation without being ordained. Her name is Karen Heidebrecht Thiessen, and the church seems to benefit greatly from her gifts.*

"For Thiessen, the pastoral position is the fruition of a calling: 'All my life I knew that I was heading toward some kind of full-time ministry.' She studied at Mennonite Brethren Bible College and the University of Winnipeg and received her master of divinity degree at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary. Shortly after, she and her husband, Richard, moved to Winnipeg. She still hasn't celebrated her 30th birthday.

"For one member, Edmond Dyck, the issue of women in ministry has not been resolved to his satisfaction, although he has a high opinion of Thiessen. 'If anyone could make the grade it would be her,' he said. 'She is charming, a hard worker and will tackle almost anything.' But he added, 'We don't know whether Paul's ideas about women were only for his time or for all time. We have never figured out what is right and we have never agreed.'

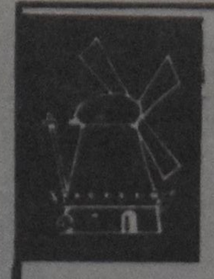
"'After a recent chat with Thiessen, he said, 'I don't think she is fighting a feminist battle. She does a good job. The younger people are taken with her and think we're doing the right thing. Maybe it's right. I just don't know.'

"Even though the Mennonite Brethren have had one other woman in a senior pastor position in a small church, most trained women are only allowed associate positions. Ordination is still out of the question.

"'I wouldn't become ordained if I were asked,' said Thiessen. 'I don't see it as being in harmony with our Anabaptist theology. Ordination is a carry over from the Catholic tradition. Calling people 'Reverend' is like saying they are set apart for the rest of their lives.

"'I believe in commissioning people for certain tasks, for certain times, but not conferring status. So, for me, ordination isn't an issue. I have chosen not to be ordained and the fact that I'm not allowed to be ordained is irrelevant.'

"There are many who wonder what will happen when the issue of women in ministry is presented at the next Mennonite Brethren convention. According to Thiessen, women in pastoral roles is not a confessional issue."



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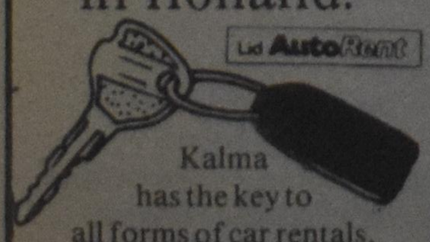

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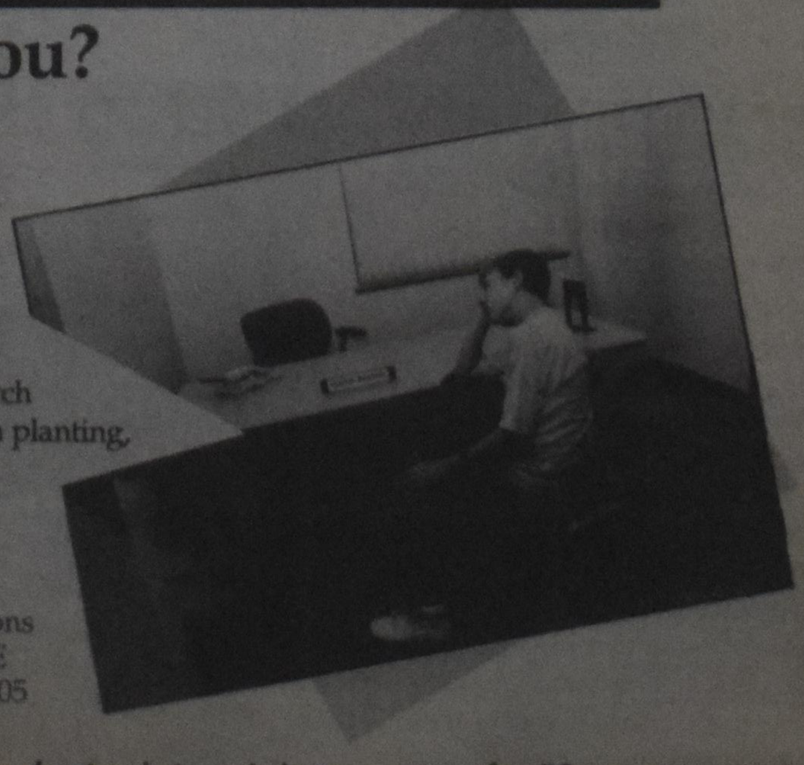

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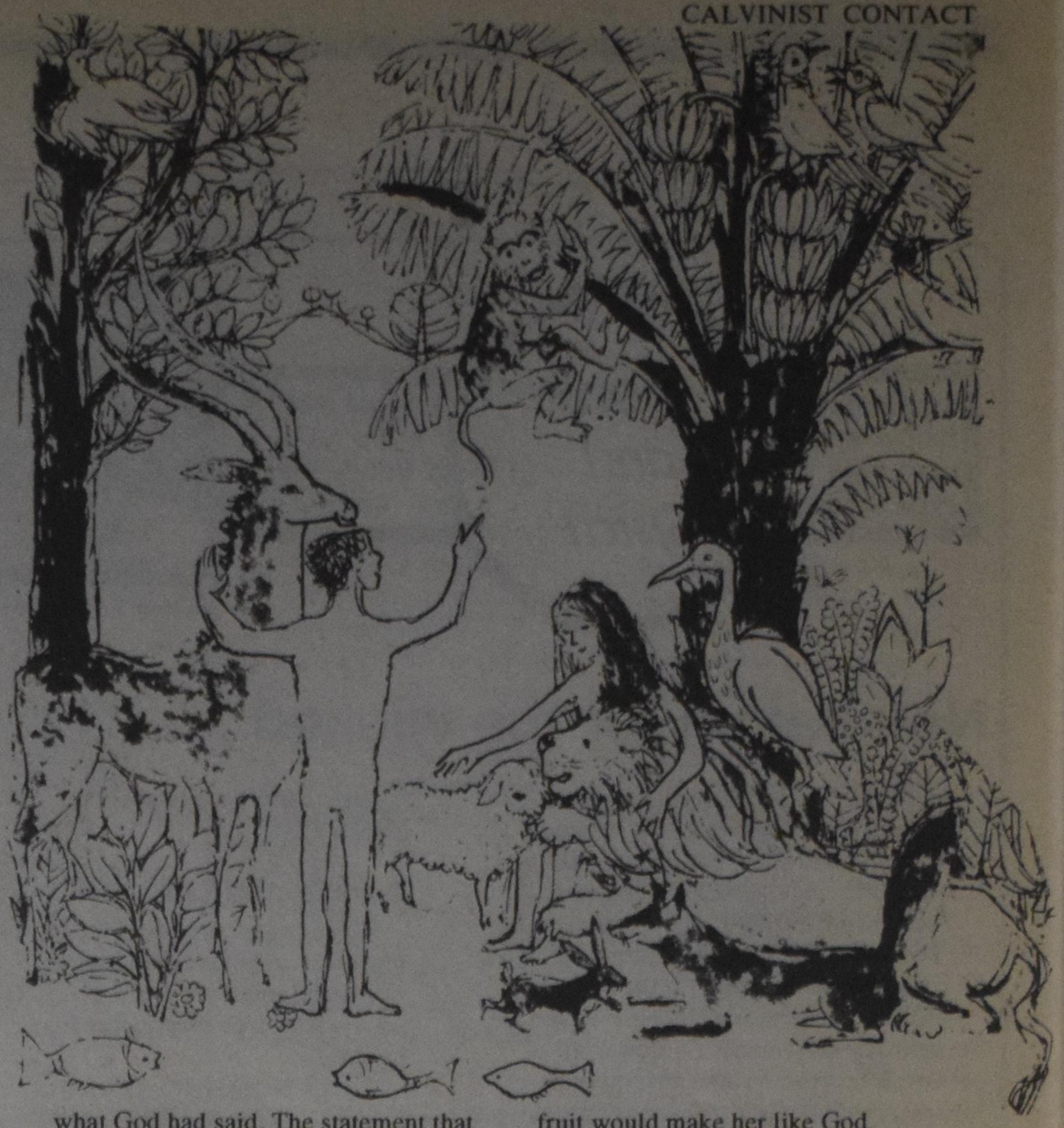
Feature

A choice between two lovely trees



Bert Witvoet

The history of humanity, as it is told in the book of Genesis, started in a garden — the Garden of Eden. Actually, it was more an orchard than a garden. Adam and Eve may have tended a flower and vegetable garden for their own pleasure and nourishment, but their main source of food seems to have come from the trees planted by the Lord, "trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food" (Gen. 2:9).

Even though there were plenty of fruit trees around to give strength to Adam and Eve and to still their hunger, they needed a special tree to keep them from dying: the tree of life. It stood in the middle of the garden on the banks of the river Pishon which flowed from Eden and watered the garden. As long as Adam and Eve ate from this tree of life, sickness and death would be averted. Perhaps this tree had such wonderful medicinal powers that its fruit would immediately restore health and its leaves immediately heal wounds.

The temptation tree

But near the tree of life stood another special tree. It too was a wonderful tree, with fruit that was equally "good for food and pleasing to the eye" (Gen. 3: 6). This was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What a strange power there was hidden in the juices of this tree! By eating its fruit, Adam and Eve could gain knowledge. It was like an instant university, or more appropriately perhaps, an instant school of theology. Or was it an instant school of life? Was the knowledge that Adam and Eve could gain moral discernment, knowing what's good and what's evil? Surely the Lord had planted this tree in the middle of the garden so that they could daily eat from it and make good moral judgments.

Not so. God did not at all want them to eat from this tree. Perhaps the tree itself had no extraordinary powers, but the act of disobeying God would constitute the beginning of the knowledge of good and evil. According to God's word, Adam and Eve could eat from any other tree in the garden but not from this one. If they did the punishment would be severe. "For when you eat of it," said God, "you will surely die."

That's strong language, hinting at a very strong need to heed God's words. One could almost call this tree the tree of death. Strange that in the middle of this idyllic park there should be such a dangerous tree. It's like living on a farm that has a poisoned well in the middle of one of its fields. God was putting Adam and Eve to the test. Obedience was not going to be an automatic thing for them.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Satan, whose main purpose it had become to foil God's plans, would show up at this spot in the garden. This was the only place where Satan could penetrate the happy world of two people walking with their God. This, he thought, would be God's Achilles heel. It turned out to be Adam and Eve's heel, or humanity's heel, that Satan would bruise.

Satan's strategy

Satan took the guise of one of God's good creatures, a snake, and waited patiently in or near the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Crafty as he was, the ancient serpent began to question Eve in a way that was intended to sow confusion in her mind. Instead of asking her directly whether or not God had forbidden her and Adam to eat of this one tree, he asked whether God had really said, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden." Of course God had said no such thing. What he had said was that they *could* eat of any tree in the garden, *except* from the tree of discernment.

Eve answered by setting Satan straight. Some commentators feel that Eve weakened her position by adding the phrase "And you must not touch it" to the words of God recorded earlier. I don't think so. If God did not want them to eat of the fruit it would obviously be advisable not to touch the fruit in the first place. A little extra caution does not hurt. God may well have said so too, even though it is not recorded.

The next statement by Satan was no longer a question but a statement. Whereas the question implied a lie, the statement *was* a lie. "You will not surely die." This was directly in conflict with what God had said. The statement that followed the lie was true, although by linking it to the previous statement with the connecting word "for" it became a lie. Why will they not surely die? *For* "God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

By itself that second statement was true, as God later confirmed: "The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil." But as a reason for saying that Adam and Eve would not die it implied that God was afraid that they would become like him. God was not afraid for himself. If he was afraid it was because he knew that Adam and Eve would get hurt. He was afraid for them.

Human desire

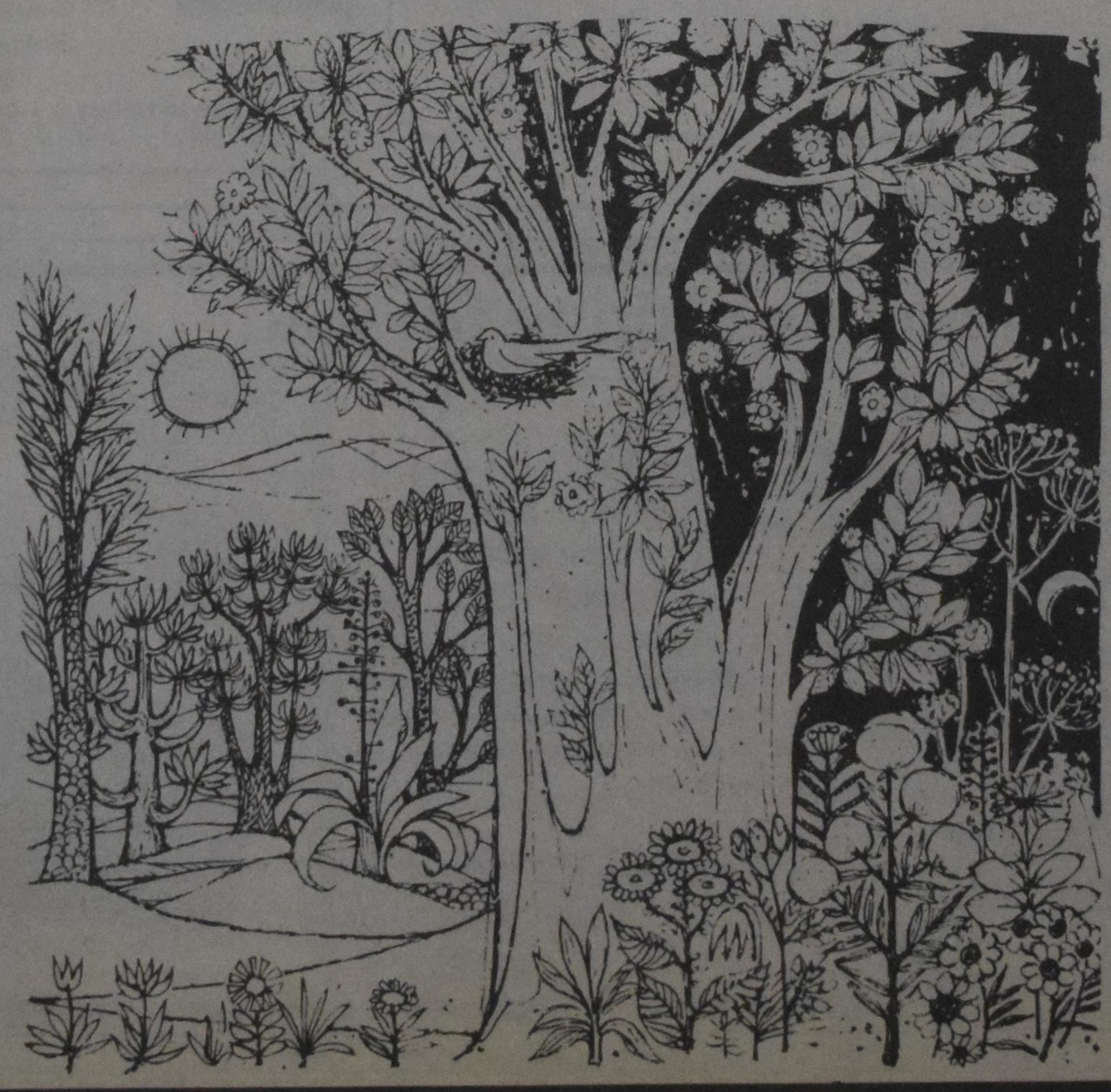
When Eve decided to eat the fruit it seemed to be for another reason than the one on which Satan had been working. She did not indicate that she wanted to become like God, only that "the fruit was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom." But that may all have been part of the package of wanting to be like God or wanting to have what God has. Maybe she did realize that eating of the fruit would make her like God.

Where was Adam at this point? Most people have Adam somewhere else in the garden while Satan was taking the opportunity to make his gains with the "weaker member" of the human pair. But the Genesis story tells us that Eve "also gave some to her husband, *who was with her*, and he ate it."

Adam heard the whole conversation and was passively consenting. He was no stronger than Eve. Eve did not lead him into temptation. He slid into it with his eyes wide open. Why did he not object? His later defence, "The woman you put here with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it," is a total cop-out. Nice try, Adam. You really set something in motion that many generations of men have resorted to as gospel truth, as proof that women cannot be trusted.

Adam and Eve's eyes were opened, we read. They had actually gained the knowledge of good and evil, the knowledge of moral discernment. Did they not have such discernment before? No, they only knew good, not its opposite.

They were totally naive, just as a newborn baby is totally naive. They questioned nothing; they accepted everything for what it was. Although they were naked, they were not ashamed. They were not self-conscious. They were not self-aware. Psychologists and preachers would have been totally useless to them. They were trusting, vulnerable and wonderfully childlike. They were, in that regard, not like God, who knew the difference between good and evil.



Dangerous knowledge

But God's knowledge of good and evil was not dangerous. God, who was and is pure goodness and holiness, is never destructive. However, this knowledge in the eyes and minds of Adam and Eve was extremely dangerous. They could not possibly hold it responsibly. With the knowledge of evil came the experience of guilt and the devastation caused by sin. It took only one generation to commit fratricide. That's why God had forbidden them to eat of the fruit in the first place.

Perhaps a time would have come that God would have allowed them to eat of the tree. Perhaps under the tutelage of God Adam and Eve and their

descendants would have reached such a level of maturity and cultural development in the state of holiness that a knowledge of good and evil would no longer have been harmful but beneficial.

Maybe the eating of the fruit is a typical case of human impatience. We see it in children wanting to dress and act like teenagers and listen to music that is far too advanced for them; we see it in teenagers wanting to drive cars and drink like adults; we see it in young people engaging in premarital intercourse. We see it in adults getting themselves into debt, not being able to wait until they can afford what they want today. Waiting for God's good time to do what is responsible is something with which many human beings have a hard time. We, too, want to be like God and to be able to have what he has, know what he knows. We want his power, his status, his wealth.

Death enters

Where the serpent was wrong was in saying that Eve and Adam would not surely die — as if God would turn his head and let them continue eating from the tree of life. Without that fruit from the tree of life, Adam and Eve were subject to the wearing-down forces of death which from then on would stalk human beings from the moment of conception.

Satan was right in saying that eating the forbidden fruit in and of itself would not kill the woman. But he forgot to mention that life was not a guarantee. Or did Satan, the father of lies, not realize that life would in all likelihood be withheld from Adam and Eve if they did eat? That's a distinct possibility, because those who serve the lie inevitably end up believing the lie.

And so that little detail of living or dying became the crucial but missing component in the attempt to be like God. Once Adam and Eve had succumbed, God did not want them to live forever. He did not allow himself to be thwarted in his ultimate plans of bringing the creation to a glorious fulfilment.

To prevent Adam and Eve from living forever in their hopeless condition of not being able to wisely apply their knowledge of good and evil and thereby dooming all of creation, God banished them from the garden. God cared too much for his creation to allow it to be eternally cursed.

Ever since Adam and Eve left the garden their children and descendants have been eating of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. They've had no choice. The genie was out of the bottle. We, people of the 20th century, have also been eating from it. And there's no way that we can keep our children from that tree.

With this knowledge we have made great discoveries, have developed high technology and have pushed back the curtain of ignorance in the realms of psychology, art and medicine. Yet with this knowledge we have also created totalitarian systems, drug rings, pollution, sophisticated weapons and pornography. We don't have the spiritual maturity to take the creation to where it should go. For that reason, God still does not allow us to eat from the tree of life, at least not here on earth.

God's strategy

What God did do was send us a new Adam, one who could and would keep himself from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Christ was the innocent, completely child-like human who trusted God completely and never believed the lie of the serpent. He did not question God's wisdom but, instead, threw back to Satan the Word of God: "It is written ...."

Eve made a feeble attempt at quoting what God had said, but she did not use it to defeat the purpose of the serpent. She timidly debated but did not proclaim. Jesus proclaimed the Word of God. He *was* the Word of God. And through his obedience he was able to crush the head of the serpent, thereby opening up again the way to the tree of life ... for himself. And all other humans who want to come to the tree of life must come to him first. He, after all, *is* the tree of life.

The new Adam is the means by which God picks up his eternal purpose for the creation. That's not just future tense, as if the renewal of creation must wait until the return of Christ. God is busy renewing his creation today. He even allows us to lift the curse here and there. The ground can be made more tillable and more fruitful. Daily work can become less tedious. Childbirth can be less painful. The domination of husband over wife can be lifted in many places. It is especially the Body of Christ that may lead the way in lifting the curse as that body allows the flow of grace to pulse through its veins.

To a certain extent, we can stop eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and, instead, eat from the tree of life. Because of Jesus Christ, that choice becomes a possibility in a symbolic and eschatological way, as well as in an experiential way. We can keep ourselves "innocent" in the ways of the world. We can keep ourselves from engaging in corrupt practices. We can say to the serpent: "It is written ...," and mean it. And through Christ, we may partake of the fruits of the tree of life, seeking healing and restoration of our lives and relationships.

The new city

But lest we become too utopian about the renewal of life and the world in which we live, and believe again in the lie of the serpent, we must keep in mind that we shall surely die, and that the curse will not be fully lifted until the end of time. Our knowledge of good and evil needs to be placed in the hands of Christ. We must pray continually that we be kept from harming the creation and each other, and that we may give honour to our Creator God.

For sure, we shall live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. But we hold that promise in hope, as sojourners who were chased out of the garden, away from the tree of life, and as refugees who have no abiding city until Jesus Christ comes again.

Revelation 22 tells us that once we enter the new city of God we will have full access again to the tree(s) of life: "On each side of the river [of the water of life] stood the tree of life, bearing 12 crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse." This is clearly the ultimate solution to what began in paradise.

But a lot of time has passed under the bridge since paradise. A lot of suffering, a lot of destruction. A lot of irresponsible knowing and acting. The lie has had a lot of opportunity to conquer human hearts. Many people have become people of the lie. They have believed the lie that money makes the world go round. Many people have surrounded themselves with the smog of distortion when it comes to sexuality, personal looks, possessions, and the meaning of happiness. Whole cultures have arisen that have twisted human thinking. Traditions and customs have choked out the light of truth.

The redemption of history

Yet at the same time, the light of truth has never been extinguished. The creation has kept on speaking up, preventing the lie from becoming too powerful. The Scriptures have shed light and invited people to walk in the light. The Spirit has moved in people's hearts and enabled them to respond to the truth.

Because of this unwillingness of God to let the world destroy itself, we must acknowledge the importance of human history and of cultural development. God's command to "be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it" is being heeded, in spite of humanity's disobedience. At the end of time we will not have come full circle, back at the gate of the garden. We are moving from garden to city, from primitive culture (primitive agriculture and handcrafts) to modern culture — the arts, science and technology, greater self-awareness and more advanced social, psychological and political insight. Satan has failed in this way, too.

God's grace has never left humankind. From the promise in paradise that the serpent's head would be crushed and the handing out of garments of skin to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness until the end of human history, God has never forsaken and will not forsake the work of his hands.

One day he will purify his children and all the positive things of human development. One day we will be able to say about the final outcome, "And God saw all that he had made and redeemed, and, behold, it was very good."

Feature

The riddles of Easter Island

Mario Acha Kutscher

According to tradition, Easter Island's first king named the place where he landed after a long and difficult sea voyage, ***te pito o te henua,*** *or "The Navel of the World." So began the development, more than 1,500 years ago, of a mysterious culture that is only partly known to us.*

Photos: Unesco/Mario Acha Kutscher

A single ahu *can have a row of as many as 12 statues, almost always looking towards the interior of the island. The* pukao *or headdresses weigh about 11 tonnes.*

The island was probably discovered accidentally by colonizers who arrived from somewhere in Polynesia and who called it *Hotu Matu'a.* About 12,000 people lived on the island and left behind work in various forms of stone, carried out with very simple tools. The life of these ancient inhabitants of Easter Island resembled that of other Polynesian communities, particularly in its cult of ancestor worship.

Easter Island lies some 3,200 kilometres from the Chilean coast and is one of the world's most isolated places. Its form is triangular, about 24 kilometres long and 12 kilometres wide, with extinct volcanoes on each of its peaks. There are also innumerable caves which form an underground labyrinth. Since 1888 it has belonged to Chile, whose government is carrying out an archaeological program with a double aim.

One aim is to throw light on the events of the past 1,500 years and to solve one of the world's greatest anthropological riddles: how the island's culture could develop in extreme isolation. The second aim is to preserve, restore and exhibit the remains now in danger of being lost through deterioration.

Archaeological investigation and restoration is carried out chiefly in the *ahus*, big open temples. These show a long history of destruction, reconstruction and alteration.

They were used for the worship of ancestors and also for cremation and funeral rites. Most of them were placed near the coast, with their backs to the sea. The first European sailors who reached the island reported that they included taboo areas.

Some of the temples show great precision in stone work, and several have clear astronomical orientations linked with the position of the sun at the equinox and solstice.

Tragic in-fighting

The island has about 300 remnants of buildings, mostly dwellings and tombs. These indicate tribal divisions among the population.

Situated on higher ground are the *moai*, sculptures carved from volcanic stone which represent illustrious and revered ancestors. The statues were erected in the belief that *mana* or magic power would flow from them to protect and help the people of the island.

There are more than 800 such sculptures. Some are more than 10 metres tall and weigh 82 tons, with great headdresses of red stone balanced on their heads. Many can still be seen where they were sculptured, in the crater of a volcano, *Rano Raraku*, which was worked as a quarry for centuries.

There is evidence that the work came to a sudden halt, with several thousand stone tools abruptly abandoned.

This happened when the development of the Easter Island culture had reached its apogee, and was undoubtly the result of bitter internal struggles about which we know little. A decline into decadence followed. A period of instability and of continual tribal struggles commenced, probably during the 17th century, due, it is thought, to over-population. The very edge of mutual extermination was reached and cannibalism became a general practice.

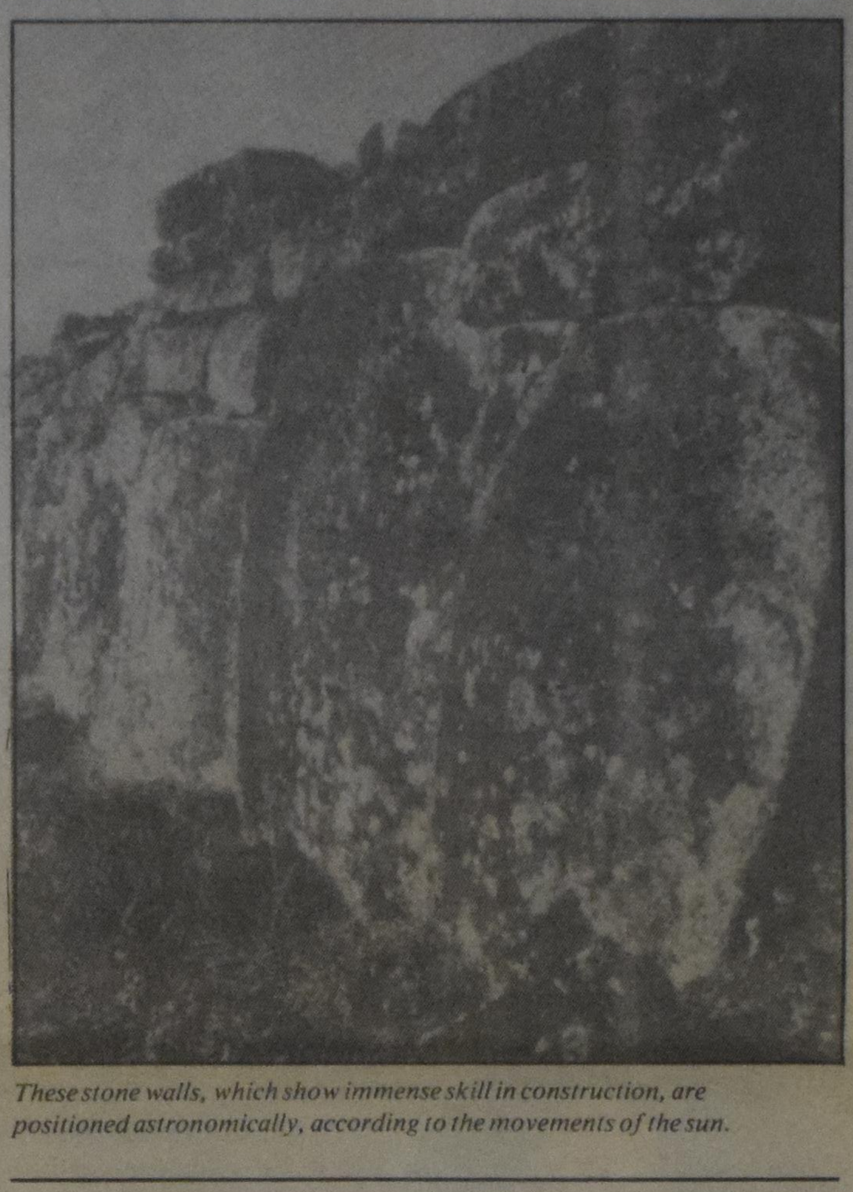
This period of persecution, horror and destruction is still recounted in the oral histories of the island.

Humidity is corrosive

During these wars the *moai*, for an unknown reason, were knocked down and abandoned to the corrosive effects of sea, rain and wind — which they still endure.

As the volcanic rock out of which they were shaped is very porous and easily penetrated by water, the *moai* are the island's biggest conservation problem.

The expensive and difficult preservation work requires international co-operation. Since 1966 Unesco, with funds from the United Nations Development Program, has provided technical aid by experts in the preservation of stonework.



These stone walls, which show immense skill in construction, are positioned astronomically, according to the movements of the sun.

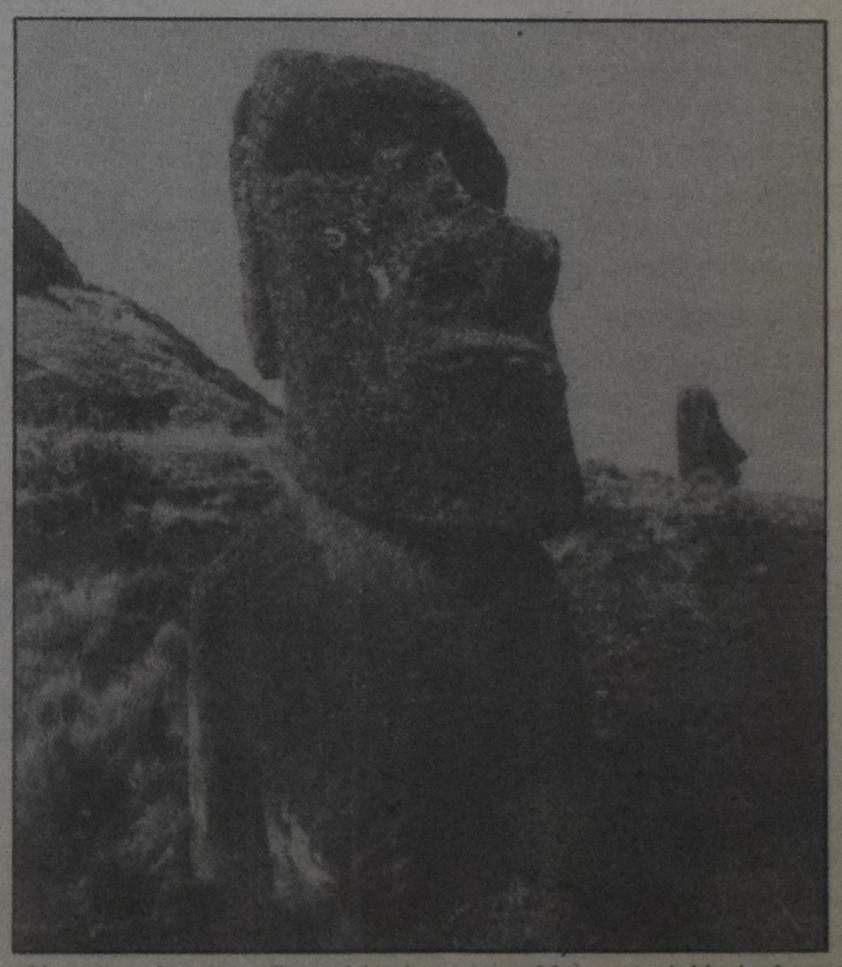
The enormous quantity of rock carvings in the island, which suffer less destruction from erosion, are being carefully documented and photographed.

What little rock painting there is is being damaged by humidity. The adherence of colours to the rock is being weakened and, even more serious, the painted structures themselves are disappearing.

In general these paintings are associated with the cult of the birdman, which consisted basically in a competition between the war-chiefs to seize the first egg of the *Manutara*, a migratory seagull which arrives each spring on the small islands nearby. Possession of the egg gave the birdman and his group enough prestige to exercise power during the course of the year. This cult is related to the supreme god *Make-Make* and reached its zenith at the time of the destruction of the sanctuaries, when the central power of the god-king passed to that of tribal chiefs.

Today Easter Island is a great open-air museum, the Oceanic Museum of Chile, with more than 10,000 archaeological sites, including monuments, statues, rock-carvings, and foundations of the houses of the ancient inhabitants. Their preservation will depend largely on our concern for them and the help that we will give.

Reprinted from Unesco Features.



Gigantic sculptures on Easter Island were carved from a single block of stone. Rain and wind have damaged them.

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Smart shoppers take stock

TORONTO (MCCR) — Shoppers can save money by clipping coupons, buying in bulk and looking for specials. But they probably won't save a *lot* of money until they take an organized approach to reducing grocery costs.

Smart-shoppers experts at Ontario's consumer ministry say consumers who want to cut their grocery bills should begin by taking stock of their current spending habits.

"Knowing what you're buying now, how much that's costing you and which purchases you're wasting will help you start a budget that works," says Marilyn Guresvsky, a manager at the ministry's Consumer Services Bureau. "It will mean more money in your wallet at the end of every month."

To calculate current spending, save all your receipts for several weeks. If you think you're spending too much on groceries, the information on those receipts can help you in two ways.

First, calculate how much you spend on each grocery category. These include basic foods, convenience foods, non-edibles (cleansers, detergents and paper products) and pet supplies. Look at ways of reducing costs in each category.

For example, you can often replace some convenience foods with less expensive basic ones. However, experts say most shoppers can most easily save money with non-edible products.

"Look for items with lower unit prices, and check local discount and bulk stores to help reduce bills for non-edibles," says Gurevsky.

You can also save money by reducing the number of grocery items you waste. Experts say consumers may throw out from five to 20 per cent of the groceries they buy. Usually this happens when they buy items because they're on sale, but really don't want or need them. Another reason for high wastage is overbuying fresh produce.

Compare prices

As the next step in preparing your budget, group together those items you buy regularly and the brand names you prefer. If you can remember buying anything you didn't plan on, make a note of it ... becoming aware of impulse buying will help you curb it.

Compare the prices of your favourite brands at several stores. Then take the time to look at the prices and ingredients lists of competing products.

You may be surprised to discover that the prices of goods with generic labels may be far lower than brand-name products in one instance and almost identical in the next.

Make up a list of alternative products you want to try, and take it with you the next time you go shopping.

This list should be used together with a weekly menu to help you plan to shop the specials and use coupons. Don't prepare it all at once just before you leave for the store. Write it over the course of the week, as appealing meals occur to you.

With the list of product names you want to buy, menu and coupons in hand, you're ready.

Shopping tips

When you go shopping, keep these tips in mind.

* It's true — never shop on an empty stomach. You'll find the appeal of, say, fresh-baked bread irresistible and end up buying much more than you need.

* Plan to buy enough of everything so you don't have to shop often. Making fewer trips to the store reduces impulse buying.

* Whenever possible, shop alone. Children and spouses encourage impulse buying.

* Look at the middle shelf last. Items placed at eye level are there because the store wants to promote them. They may be a good deal, but check top and bottom shelves first.

* Don't look at aisle-end specials until you've finished your other shopping, then compare prices carefully. Many people think items at the end of aisles are always on sale, which isn't the case.

* Experiment — a little. The only way to find out whether the less-expensive generic brand really is as good as the name brand is to try it. But try a can before you buy a case.

Daily-bread economics

Children in crisis and family values

Bert Hielema

Children and family have received quite a lot of attention lately. This year three major American news magazines have devoted their lead articles to the problems of the family.

Newsweek in January showed in "The Legacy of Divorce" how children of broken marriages carry deep wounds into their own adult lives. *Newsweek* suggested that women whose parents were divorced have a higher chance of getting divorced themselves than do adult children of intact families.

In June *Business Week*, in its economics section, wondered, "Where have all the families gone?" It observed that the rise in single-family households will keep rocking the U.S. It concluded that economic forces, especially declining wages, have played a major role in causing marriage break-ups.

The real surprise was *Fortune* magazine. Its August 10 issue was devoted entirely to "Children in Crisis." I subscribe to this outspoken capitalistic periodical as well as the others and was really surprised to read, "If the well-being of its children is the proper measure of the health of a civilization, the United States is in grave danger."

Terrifying trends

In typical *Fortune* fashion, the articles were full of graphs and statistics. Items: about half of all the boys and a quarter of all the girls are able to get a gun on a whim; in Washington, D.C., schools do not start with prayer but with a weapons check; playground fights that used to end in a bloody nose now end in death.

Fortune is worried the epidemic of divorce, re-marriage, re-divorce, illegitimacy, plus new strains within intact families, have caused a crisis in the inner lives of North American children. Family collapse and turmoil have so penetrated the minds of children that virtually every child in North America, exposed to the distress of friends whose parents are splitting apart, fears that the family situation in which his or her own childhood is anchored, may go the same way. Waves of anxiety are inundating the schools of our nations.

The welfare of our children is at such a risk that corporate America is worried: divorce is bad for business, as it creates an ever growing underclass. Divorce hampers the intellectual development of children, creating more school drop-outs in an age where to survive, more schooling is required. The recently concluded North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will accelerate this process. With the economy becoming more global, competition is dragging down pay for lower-skilled workers. Lower wages generate more latch-key kids as, increasingly, two wages are needed to maintain a basic standard of living. This aggravates another problem: the prime determinant of drinking and drug abuse is how many hours a child is left alone during the week.

Priorities

Both President Bush and Governor Clinton in their campaign speeches are outbidding each other in offering the greater "family value." Clinton is calling for higher taxes to provide better conditions for families. Bush, by constantly repeating the phrase, tries to give content to the concept. He and his religious Republicans are promising tax cuts made possible by decreasing the support for welfare and medicare, support already well below international standards. Where Canada allows 15 weeks of maternity leave at 60 per cent of salary, and most other countries have more generous arrangements, the U.S. is the only major industrial country without a parental leave law.

If we value families, if we value children, if we value our future, then we have certain commitments and responsibilities which take precedence over personal gratification.

What is more gratifying than to see children and grandchildren flourish, even if it means higher taxes?

Bert Hielema is a real estate appraiser who lives in Tweed, Ont.

Women will 'revolutionize the church'

TELLURIDE, Colo. (EP) — Authors John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene, who turned the world's attention to the future with their multi-million-selling book *Megatrends*, predict a female-friendly future in their new book *Megatrends for Women*. They predict that women will continue to revolutionize the organized church, which they call "the most sexist institution in history." Feminist theology will begin to be felt in neighbourhood churches and synagogues, they predict. Aburdene explains, "Women need a new vision. As long as God is male, the male is god."

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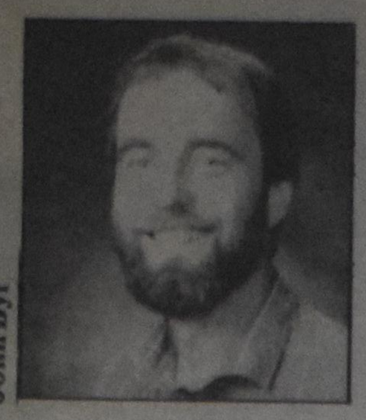

John Byl

REFLEXION

Dying young as late as possible

Over 2,000 seniors 55 and over converged on Hamilton this summer to participate in the fourth bi-annual Ontario Senior Games. There were passive events such as cribbage and bridge. But most of the 18 contests were more active and included: horseshoes, lawn bowling, golf, swimming, tennis, triathlon (soft-ball throw, one-kilometre walk and 25-metre swim), snooker and walking.

Qualifying trials were held in 38 different communties. The elderly enjoy competition as much as any of us and there was consideration given to those less-experienced players. In golf, a handicap system was used to challenge the experienced players and give the less experienced players a meaningful competition. The banquets and breaks, between and during games, encouraged positive social interaction as well.

Recently I went to a seniors' home and spoke with a woman anchored to a wheel chair and confined to the home because she was so over-weight that her wheelchair would not fit on a Dart's bus. What a pity she did not walk more and eat less; think of the freedoms she could enjoy.

Contrast this to a 72-year-old single woman my family visited this summer. She retired from teaching seven years ago and bought a horse ranch so that she could teach riding to children.

My colleague here at Redeemer College has studied weight training and the elderly and his work makes me think again of those who can hardly get out of a chair. Just think how the quality of people's lives could be improved by increased muscular activity.

If you are not physically active you might try something as simple as walking. It would be helpful to consult your physician before beginning, but go for it. Get a good pair of walking shoes; get a friend who wants to walk with you; set aside some time for it; begin slowly with short distances and progress to longer and more vigorous walks; but *do* it. Perhaps you might eventually want to walk the 7,000 plus yards on a golf course with some friends.

What's your state of mind?

I have often thought about Zechariah's speaking the words of the Lord in blessing Jerusalem. He said "Again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there" (8: 4-5). Speaking to our time, he might well have prophesied about men and women of old age who are walking scenic trails with a friend or grandchild, playing tennis with each other, or coaching little children in riding or other playful activities. This would be consistent with the motto of the American Health Foundation that states: "The art of living consists of dying young, but as late as possible." Rather like Moses, who was 120 years old when he died, "yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone" (Deut. 34: 7).

John Byl teaches physical education at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Media critic critiques himself to the sidelines

Marian Van Til

American political analyst Noam Chomsky is the most quoted living scholar, according to the *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, and he ranks in eighth place over all — behind Marx, Lenin, Shakespeare, Aristotle, the Bible, Plato and Freud. But he's now being ignored by the mainstream U.S. media and political culture because they can't tolerate his message, reports free-lance journalist Tony Kwan.

Chomsky's message is that the mainstream American media are anything but "independent and adversarial," as they like to assert. Rather, they are corporations in a corporation-dominated society and they "frame" issues in a way that reflects that.

There are a few "agenda-setting" media, like the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, says Chomsky, "which are pretty much aimed at elites. They set the framework within which everybody else operates. Then there is the real mass media that goes after the huge popular audiences."

"All the media, agenda-setting and popular, are huge corporations," asserts Chomsky. "Like every corporation they have a product and they sell it to a market. The market is advertisers. The product is people; that is, audiences. So when you look at the agenda-setting media, the 'product' that they are 'selling' is priveleged audiences" — other businesses.

The rest of the media get their cues from the agenda-setting media, Chomsky says. But their task is to "marginalize the public, to keep them away from anything having to do with decision-making, to teach them a system of values that will make them subordinate, passive spectators."

Thus the emphasis on sports, sex comedies, cop shows and other fluff. And thus the emphasis on pursuing trivial issues regarding the U.S. presidential campaign. "The only issues that arise in the political system are those that divide sectors of the business class." The U.S. electorate are not unaware of this, Chomsky believes. That's why a huge percentage of them don't bother to vote.

The up-shot of Chomsky's analysis is a conclusion that is anathema to most people's implicit belief that we live in democratic societies. But Chomsky points out, "As long as authority, power and decision-making are narrowly concentrated you *don't* have a democratic society. You can pick around the edges of it. So to the extent that there are popular movements, like let's say unions or solidarity groups, etc., they can have an influence. But basically, you're dealing with a system of centralized corporate power."

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Books

Robert VanderVennen, page editor

Two Reformed books on philosophy

Faith and Philosophy from Plato to Plantinga, *by Dewey J. Hoitenga, Jr. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1991. Softcover, 263 pp.; $18.95 U.S.*

The Myth of Religious Neutrality: An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories, by Roy A. Clouser. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991. Hardcover, 330 pp.; $18.95 U.S. Reviewed by Hendrik Hart, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

For certain people, these are two important books. Which people? Those with any interest at all in the way Christian intellectuals in North America deal with the relation of their faith to their intellectual pursuits.

By now it is clear to many who have this interest that Reformed Christians in North America present two distinct though related profiles in this respect. One is the comprehensive approach known as reformational philosophy; the other is the more limited pursuit of reformed epistemology.

Both are philosophical traditions. The former (going back in time to the mid-1920s) was most significantly introduced on this continent by H. Evan Runner; the latter (emerging in the mid 1970s) by Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff, both originally from Calvin College.

These two traditions first met in 1981 at a conference at the Institute for Christian Studies to discuss rationality in the Calvinian tradition. Two speakers at the conference have now, 10 years later, produced books intended to introduce these two traditions to an audience somewhat wider than just philosophers. They have attempted to make their traditions available to educated people who have no former training in philosophy but who are nevertheless interested in this philosophy, hoping it may help them with their spiritual orientation in their intellectual pursuits.

Reformed epistemology

Reformed epistemology is an attempt within the analytic philosophical tradition to take seriously the philosopher's surrender to God in Christ. In that tradition the rational justification of intellectual beliefs is a very core issue. Reformed epistemologists have developed an approach to this justification in which they try to demonstrate that our knowledge of God is not limited to or even dependent on justified intellectual beliefs. Instead, they say, within the context of our immediate knowledge of God we are quite justified in having a number of beliefs without having prior rational justification for these beliefs.

Hoitinga traces the problem of the relationship between knowledge and justified belief all the way back to Plato and makes a case for the distinctively Reformed approach to this problem articulated by Plantinga (now at Notre Dame) and Wolterstorff (now at Yale). He concentrates, however, on the work of Plantinga.

Hoitinga's book is thorough, lucid, and very readable.I do not believe a philosophical tradition can be made much clearer to a wider intellectual audience without seriously compromising the tradition's teachings. As an introduction to Reformed epistemology the book is unique and cannot be compared to another. It would be my guess that any attempt to surpass it in pedagogical skill and philosophical integrity will be very difficult.

Hoitinga is an experienced undergraduate teacher and he has brought all his experience to bear on this text. He has been sufficiently successful, in my view, to allow the judgment that without intellectual compromise his text is readable for someone who has an interest in taking an undergraduate course in philosophy.

Reformational philosophy

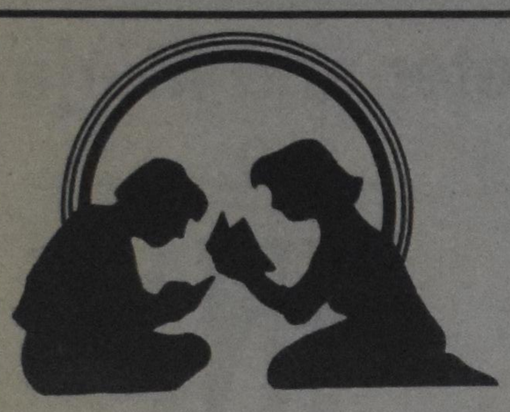
Reformational philosophy has a much broader philosophical interest. Besides developing a theory of knowing and particularly of *theoretic* knowing, that tradition has also developed theories of the general structure of the cosmos, as well as of the general structure of many more limited realities such as human society, church, state, family, things, relationships between these, art, technology, morality, theology and more. It tries, in fact, to develop comprehensive theories in all philosophical fields of interest.

Like Reformed epistemology, reformational philosophy has also developed an extensive theory of how all theoretical thinking is religiously rooted. Clouser, in his book, provides a fairly comprehensive introduction to the entire scope of reformational philosophy but uses this theory of theoretical thinking and its religious roots as his point of entry.

Unlike Hoitenga's, Clouser's book is not unique. Others before him have attempted to write a widely accessible introduction to this tradition, notably Spier and Kalsbeek. In the opinion of professional philosophers in this tradition these others have, regrettably, more or less failed. But Clouser has, in my view, succeeded so well that, like Hoitinga's book, improving on his attempt will prove to be difficult.

Clouser brings the same experience and skills to his project as Hoitenga, with the same result. He has, as I see it, gone as far as one can possibly go in simplifying issues without becoming simplistic or without intellectual compromise. He has also, I think, unavoidably coloured the introduction by presenting his own version of the tradition, which is one quite faithful to the views of its major originator, Herman Dooyeweerd.

In short, anyone looking for excellent introductions to two important intellectual heritages relevant to contemporary thought will do well to consult these two splendid texts.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

My God is bigger than your god!

"I know that the Lord is great, that our Lord is greater than all gods" (Psalm 135: 5)

Boasting can be invigorating sport. Two young lads found a stray puppy one day and both wanted to take it home. They finally decided to hold a contest of skills in order to find the winner of this prize. They would each tell a story, and the one that seemed the most fantastic, the most unbelievable, the most exaggerated, would be the one that earned the furry friend.

The stories were good. In fact, as the pastor of their church happened to walk by he was amazed at the lies and fairy tales they were spinning! "Boys! Boys!" he said. "You shouldn't tell false stories like that! Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie!"

The youngsters looked at each other with regret. Then the oldest said to the minister, "Well, that's got to be the biggest fib of all! Here's your puppy, sir."

Haughtiness

Some people bost out of pride. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote this little prayer for proud persons in his *A Child's Garden of Verses*:

When I am grown to man's estate
I shall be very proud and great,
And tell the other girls and boys
Not to meddle with my toys.

Many people, I think, pray it. When the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes came to Plato's house one day he was disgusted to find rich and exquisite carpets on the floor. To show his contempt he stamped and wiped his feet upon them, saying, "Thus do I trample upon the pride of Plato!"

Plato observed, and responded mildly, "With greater pride than mine, I see!"

The trouble with our measuring sticks

Someone tells the story of a little boy who wanted to know how tall he was and so he made a ruler by which to measure himself. He found that he was *nine feet tall*! But those around him realized that the standard he had set was his own.

Usually that's the problem with pride: it measures us and ours by rulers we create to our own dimensions.

But there can also be good pride, honest pride, pride that has its measuring stick firmly grounded in reality. Isak Dinesen spoke of it in her book *Out of Africa*. She said, "Pride is faith in the idea that God had when he made us. A proud man is conscious of the idea and aspires to it."

Looking higher

That's not a bad thought to keep in mind. And if we take it further, we realize that the boasting of the poet in Psalm 135 is something of the same. "My God is bigger than your god!" he shouts to whatever little powers might vie for his allegiance. He's not measuring by standards he created out of his own school kit; he just happens to be in touch with reality as deeply as one can be.

The true way to be humble, said Philips Brookes, "is not to stoop until you are smaller than yourself, but to stand at your real height against some higher nature that will show you what the real smallness of your greatness is."

None need stand against a greatness greater than the God of Psalm 135. And when you boast out of that context, the shout of pride that's raised is very, very good!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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MCC sends food to Somali refugees, encourages clan mediation

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is responding to the worst humanitarian crisis in the world by sending food to Somali refugees and promoting mediation among Somalia's warring clans. Conflict and drought in Somalia have left a quarter of the population at risk of starving.

MCC's Somalia work dates back to 1975 when MCC began assisting Ethiopian refugees there. MCC volunteers left Somalia in July 1989 when escalating violence made it impossible for them to continue their work. Now MCC worker Bonnie Bergey co-ordinates the Somalia program from a Nairobi, Kenya, base.

Three hundred metric tons (MT) of MCC-donated food is currently heading for Somali refugee camps in Kenya. The Canadian Baptist Federation will distribute this food. In late 1991 MCC sent about 400 MT of food for United Nations (U.N.) use in Somali refugee camps.

Kenya now hosts about 330,000 Somali refugees. Held in U.N.-run camps, refugees receive meager rations through the World Food Program. The food provided is not sufficient for children under 5 and malnourished and sick people who need to rebuild their strength. Camp officials use MCC food in special supplemental feeding programs for these groups.

'Peace agency' doesn't like armed guards

Distributing food inside Somalia itself is difficult. Food shipments are regularly being looted. This causes a dilemma for MCC, a peace church agency. "The problem in Somalia is not so much availability of relief food as one of security and transport. We are reluctant to hire armed guards to protect our food and personnel," says Eric Olfert, MCC Africa co-secretary.

Bergey makes frequent trips to Somalia to assess the situation. She returned from Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, on Aug. 26.

"In general, the situation was much better than I had expected. People were not so emaciated and food is available," she reports. "However, from what I heard and saw, people outside Mogadishu are much worse off."

At present, significant amounts of food are "in the pipeline and on the docks," a U.S. AID official said. Recent media coverage of Somalia's desperate situation has prompted a generous world response.

Addressing the root cause

In addition to relief, MCC is working at the root cause of the Somali crisis. Olfert defines this as "conflict, societal breakdown, inter-clan rivalries and anarchy."

Since rebels drove former President Siad Barre from Somalia in January 1991, the country has disintegrated into bloody clan warfare. Guns rule instead of government. Somalia was flooded with weapons during the Cold War, first by the former Soviet Union and later by the United States.

For several years MCC has been working with a group of Somalis living in North America, Europe and the Middle East who are committed to solving conflict through dialogue and mediation rather than violence. This Somalia Peace Group includes representatives of the various clans and sub-clans.

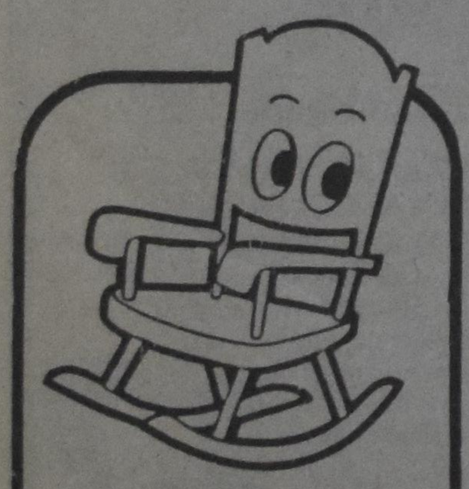
Through their contacts inside Somalia, these Somalis hope to help settle long-standing clan disputes through peaceful means. This may include reaffirming the system of clan elders that traditionally provided order and problem-solving structures.

Peacemaking can be dangerous

Peacemaking can be a dangerous undertaking. Earlier this year Ahmed Haile, a member of the Somalia Peace Group living in North America, returned to Somalia to facilitate peace talks between several clans. A shell exploded close to the meeting room and Haile's leg was severed.

Recently the U.N. invited John Paul Lederach, MCC's international conciliation specialist, to provide input at a meeting of top-level U.N. officials in Europe. Lederach was impressed by U.N. officials' extensive work in negotiating aid, peacekeeping and setting the stage for national reconciliation, he said.

"MCC remains committed to working in Somalia and with Somali people," says Olfert. "We continue to look for responsible and effective ways to help."



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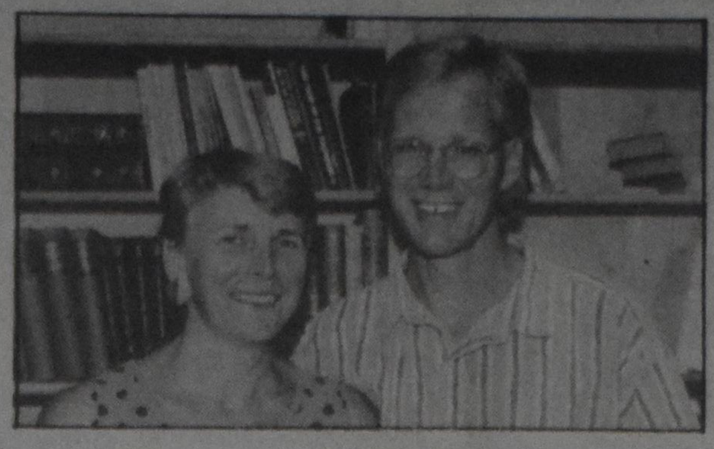

Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P&M:

I have a question which has been on my mind for a long time. I'll try to explain it. By grace, I am a Christian washed in the blood of the Lamb. I believe the teachings of the Bible and our creeds. I love to go to God's house to listen to his Word and to sing his praises. In fact, I live to his praise each day, not just on Sundays. No doubt about it, through our Lord Jesus Christ I am at peace with God!

My question is this: why am I still afraid when I think about standing before God at the judgment? Why do I especially feel such fear during a heavy thunderstorm? Despite praying earnestly, I still feel afraid.

Please answer this in your column without mentioning my name. May the Lord be near to you as you work and be a blessing in his service.

Dear Afraid of Thunder and Lightning:

The idea of standing before God with all of our weaknesses and shortcomings exposed is certainly a frightening thought. You're not alone in feeling that fear. You're not the only one who is sometimes vividly aware of her own sinfulness.

The fear of God has been thundered from many Reformed and evangelical pulpits throughout the ages. Let's face it: many preachers have used scare tactics to motivate congregations to live closer to God. In the process they have unwittingly portrayed the Lord as a God of thunder, a God with a wrathful face. This kind of emphasis may have contributed to your fear.

Undeniably, the Bible does use thunder as a metaphor for God's voice. In Psalm 29 this image represents God's power and majesty in creation as well as his judgment of Lebanon. God's people, however, did not respond in fear but in awe. They all cried, "Glory," (: 9) and were blessed with strength and peace (: 11). In other words, they actually found comfort in God's stormy displays. They felt protected by a God who was that powerful.

In a similar way, the book of Job says that "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways" (37: 5). For Elihu, the speaker in this chapter, a storm was a thrilling display of God's might. It can be that for us as well.

We wonder whether your early childhood experiences have contributed to your fear of thunderstorms. Your letter triggered many memories for Marja. When she was a child, her parents would gather the family around the dining room table in the middle of the night during particularly bad storms. All the kids would be gotten up and dressed. The important box with all the family documents was kept close at hand. And there they sat, waiting out the storm in fear and trembling. This scenario was played out in many immigrant homes. You can trace it back to the Netherlands where homes and barns with thatched roofs were especially vulnerable to fires caused by lightning strikes.

Marja's fear was dramatically heightened in Grade 3 when the Christian school in Edmonton was struck by lightning in the middle of a school day. One of those swiftly arriving, dark thunderheads, typical of Alberta, threw a bolt at the school at the precise moment that one of the girls flushed the toilet. It left a huge hole in the ceiling, blew the toilet apart, knocked the sinks off the walls and popped the nails out of the drywall in Marja's classroom. From that moment on, every child who experienced that storm refused to flush a toilet during a thunderstorm. After all, doing so might cause the bathroom to explode!

Marja's fear did not disappear until her late teens when she spent a few weeks with her older sister and brother-in-law. Their approach to thunderstorms was to sleep right through them. That was the beginning of a more relaxed view of storms. But don't ask Marja to flush a toilet or take a shower during severe weather. That would be pushing it!

On an emotional level, it makes perfect sense that thunder is equated with anger and judgment. After all, thunder is unpredictable and can be deafeningly loud. It seems to lash out. Your own letter, however, contains the best answer. That answer is the Lord Jesus Christ who is also God's voice. Through him we discover that God's speech can be gentle and loving. In Jesus we discover that the Judge is our Saviour. Since judgment has given way to salvation we have nothing to fear. This is the very thing which Elijah learned when God spoke to him not in a great and powerful wind, an earthquake, or a fire, but in a gentle whisper. That soft voice foreshadowed Jesus' voice, which is able to still our fear of judgment.

You have said that you love to praise God every day. The next time the weather turns bad, hum a hymn of praise and prayerfully recall Psalm 29 and Job 37. Then turn over in your bed, marvel at God's creative might, and fall asleep.

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The fourth grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Edward Devries of Smithville, Ont., and the 15th grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Adrian VanGeest of Grimsby, Ont. The 125th great-grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Henry Zantingh of Burlington, Ont.

Home address: 6463 Smithville Rd., R.R. #1, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

SCHREUDERS:

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father" (James 1: 17a).

Robert and Annette (nee OOSTERHOF) thank the Lord for the healthy arrival of their daughter,

STEPHANIE JOY

born at home on Tuesday Aug. 18, 1992.

Happy grandparents for the 13th time are Mr. and Mrs. J.L. Schreuders of Alkmaar, the Netherlands, and for the 14th time Mr. and Mrs. B. Oosterhof of Athens, Ont.

Home address: Kruiszwin 3712, 1788 PN Den Helder, the Netherlands.

Marriages

BROERSMA-BROUWERS:

With thanks and praise to the Lord Len and Marie Broersma announce the marriage of their daughter

LORIANNE MARIE
to
TIMOTHY JAMES

son of Bill and Bev Brouwers of Milwaukee, Wis.

Rev. Bill Brouwers and Henry Wildeboer officiated at the ceremony held on Aug. 29, 1992, at Reformed Bible College, Grand Rapids.

An open house will be held, D.V., Sept. 26, 1992, at the home of the bride's parents, 1622 Highway 2, Courtice, ON L1E 2R6.

If you wish to extend congratulations please drop by between 3 and 7 p.m.

Tim and Lorianne Brouwers, 1470 C Burke NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503, USA.

DE JONG-KELLY:

John and Grace De Jong of Guelph, Ont., joyfully announce the marriage of their daughter

SANDRA
to
BRADLEY

son of Robert and Lemay Kelly of Hamilton, Ont.

The ceremony will take place Oct. 10, 1992, at 3 p.m. in the First Chr. Ref. Church of Guelph, Ont., Rev. F. Heslinga of First Hamilton Chr. Ref. Church officiating.

Address: 29 Morgan Drive, Caledonia, ON N0A 1A0

Anniversaries

Oudega Small — Sarnia, Ont.
1932 — October 7 — 1992

With thanks and great joy to our God and Father we announce the 60th anniversary of our dear parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents,

TAEDE and AUDREY DEELSTRA
(nee DE BOER)

Mom and Dad, we are grateful to God for the way in which He has blessed us through you and we are thankful that you raised and taught us in the Christian faith.

It is our prayer that He may continue to be with you in the days ahead.

Their loving children:

Jim Deelstra (gone to be with the Lord July 10, 1962)
Gordon & Hilly Ellens — Sarnia, Ont.
Herb & Riek Deelstra — Brights Grove, Ont.
Ralph & Alice Deelstra — Wyoming, Ont.
John & Pauline Deelstra — Wyoming, Ont.
Hank & Francis Dykema — Wallaceburg, Ont.
Henry & Gladys Deelstra — Brentwood Bay, B.C.
Gary & Jane Kroesbergen — Sarnia, Ont.
Arnold & Anne Deelstra — Atwood, Ont.
Harry & Alice Giethoorn — Sarnia, Ont.
John & Bonnie VanKesteren — Lindsay, Ont.
John & Margaret Hopman — Sarnia, Ont.

47 grandchildren and 49 great-grandchildren.

Open house to be held in their honour on Tuesday, Oct. 6, 1992, D.V., from 10 to 12 a.m. at Fineview, 1310 Exmouth Str, Sarnia, Ont.

Home address: 1310 Exmouth St., Apt. 102, Sarnia, ON N7S 3Y1

Personal

Kennismaking; Chr. Ref. lady, 60 jaar, zou graag kennis maken met een Christian man van 58-65 jaar. Ik ben opgewekt en houd van gezelligheid en reizen.

Please send letter with picture to File #2594, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Evangelical Canadian lady, 53 years old, desires to meet tall Christian gentleman for longterm friendship. I am a resident in Peel Region. **Call Anne (416) 455-0746.**

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Lieuwe and Maartje Wassenaar on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary.

Beetgum, Fr. — Whitby, Ont.
1932 — September 22 — 1992

"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it ..." (Ps. 127: 1).

We joyfully announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

LIEUWE and MAARTJE WASSENAAR
(nee BOERSMA)

We are forever grateful for their countless gifts of love and support.

Andy & Emmy Wassenaar
Len & Marg, Suzanne & Scott, Yolande
Siek & Tena Wassenaar
Margot & Keith, Frances & Tony, Renee
Vivian & Klaas De Jong
Margot & John, Ralph & Wilma, Louis & Christy, Trish & Ken, David, Kathy
Sy & Mary Wassenaar
Michelle & Alex, Benita
Willem & Rosemary Wassenaar
Christopher, John, Daniel, Catherine
Tina Wassenaar

10 great-grandchildren

Open house will be held at Durham Chr. Homes in Whitby, Ont., on Sept. 26, 1992, from 10-12 a.m.

Home address: 100 Glenhill Dr. S., Apt. 500, Whitby, ON L1N 8R4

"The Lord will keep you from all harm — he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore" (Ps. 121: 7 & 8).

With praise and thankfulness to God we announce the 40th anniversary on Oct. 11, 1992, of our parents and grandparents,

HERMAN and ANNY VAN DE KLEUT
(nee TEEUWSEN)

With love and appreciation for your Christ-like example from:

Walter & Geraldine Van de Kleut — Chatham, Ont.
Aron, Caleb, Reuben
Diane Van de Kleut — London, Ont.
John & Robin Van de Kleut — Ottawa, Ont.
Kyle, Rebecca
Caroline Van de Kleut — London, Ont.

Home address: Box 37, Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0.

Phone: 1-(416) 562-5550.

1952 — October 11 — 1992

With praise and thanks to God, we are happy to announce our parents' 40th anniversary.

BRIAN and ALICE DOELMAN
(nee VAN DEN BOR)

An open house will be held on Thanksgiving Day, Monday, Oct. 12, 1992, from 3-5 p.m. at the Chr. Ref Church, Lucknow, Ont.

Best wishes only please.

Children and grandchildren:

Margaret & Chuck McMann
Kristin, Jeffrey, Jonathan
Gerald & Alice Doelman
Michael, Kelly, Wade
Karen & Ed McGugan
Heather, Brian, Alexander
Anne & Ray Reynen
Jennifer
Nick Doelman

Home address: R.R. #5, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0

Anniversaries

1952 — October 4 — 1992

"The man who finds a wife finds a good thing. She is a blessing to him from the Lord" (Prov. 18: 22).

With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord we wish to celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents.

BART and FRANCES HUIZINGA
(nee DEJONG)

We pray the Lord will continue to bless you and keep you in his loving care.

With love and congratulations:

Pat & Renee Mensinga — Sarnia, Ont.
Peter, Matthew, Allison
Betty & Arnie Wildschut — Sarnia, Ont.
Michael, Jodi, Bryan, Eric
Grace & Lorne Shaw — Mt. Forest, Ont.
Christina, Kathy & David
John & Jane Huizinga — Sarnia, Ont.
Bart, Paul, Calvin, Danny
Ralph & Teresa Huizinga — Sarnia, Ont.
Brandon, Jesse, Curtis

The Lord willing, an open house will be held on Saturday Oct. 3, 1992, at the 2nd Chr. Ref. Church, 1281 Exmouth St., Sarnia, Ont., from 2-4 p.m.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: 603 Stafford Place, Sarnia, ON N7S 3Z1

1952 — October 1 — 1992

With praise and thanksgiving to God we are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

JOHN and MARY OOTJERS
(nee HOEK)

We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you and keep you in his care.

With love from your children, their spouses and your grandchildren.

Nellie & Joe Creech — Woodstock, Ont.
Adrian, Calvin, Terry
Andy & Patty Ootjers — Brighton, Ont.
Jennifer, Tommy, Christopher, Kimberly, Andrea
Dianne & Eddie Van Roie — Brighton, Ont.
Lorie, Matthew, Vicky
Tracy & Dave Fice — Millbrook, Ont.
Shelly, Amanda
John & Karen Ootjers — Bowmanville, Ont.
Ashley, Ryan

Home address: 146 Wilmot Trail, Newcastle, ON L1B 1B9

Obituaries

The residents of South Chatham Village wish to express their deepest sympathy to Mrs. Frances Bosveld, her children, grand- and great-grandchildren in the passing of

MR. JAN BOSVELD

on Sept. 7, 1992, at the age of 84 years. We pray that God will comfort and strengthen Mrs. Bosveld and her family now and each day in the time to come.

Chatham, Ont., Sept. 7, 1992.

For Rent

For rent, 5-bedroom home, furnished, lovely country setting, **five minutes from St. Catharines, Ont.** $850 a month.

Phone: 685-3069

Obituaries

Ferwerd, Fr. — Chatham, Ont.
March 27, 1919 — Sept. 9, 1992

"Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23:6).

After a short illness, the Lord called home

DON (DOUWE) HOLWERDA

Beloved husband of Lena, nee Luyt.

Dear father and pake of:

Joyce & George — Ilderton, Ont.
Lee, Matthew
Jeanne & Gary — Blenheim, Ont.
Corinna, Cindy, David
Eleanor & Douglas — Vancouver, B.C.
Donna Lee
Carmen & Levon — Wolfville, N.S.

Funeral service was held at First Chr. Ref. Church in Chatham, 481 Indian Creek Road West, Chatham, ON N7M 2E4

On behalf of the "Golden Age Club" and the residents of South Chatham Village, we wish to express our deepest sympathy to the family with the passing away of

WILHELMINA SHAW

at the age of 76 years.

She was the organist for both societies.

Chatham, Ont., Sept. 1, 1992.

The council of the First Chr. Ref. Church of Victoria, B.C. expresses its deepest sympathy to the Phil Stel family in the rather sudden loss of their wife and mother, our beloved member,

JOYCE STEL

who was taken into glory on Sept. 4, 1992.

We pray that our heavenly Father will surround Phil and family with his love in the weeks and months ahead.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want" (Ps. 23).

Taken from our midst, unexpectedly, after a brief, virulent illness, we moum the loss of our dear friend,

JOYCE STEL

We pray that the Lord will continue to be with Phil and his family, and provide them with comfort from above.

Jake & Tina Bosgra-Rozendal
Hans & Lien Brinkert
Fred & Helen De Jong
John & Margaret Gorter
Henry & Margaret Kuyvenhoven
Henk & Liz Nienhuis
Pete & Tina Reitsma
Case & Margaret Schenk
Neil & Joan Spier
Dirk & Margaret Taekema
Art & Trudy Van Dyk

Sept. 4, 1992, Victoria, B.C.

Nieuwerkerk a/d IJssel — London, Ont.
May 3, 1904 — Sept. 5, 1992

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1: 21).

On Sept. 5, 1992, the Lord took into His glory,

ELIZABETH VAN ARNHEM
(nee KAPTEYN)

in her 89th year.

Predeceased by her beloved husband Gerrit Jan Van Arnhem, on May 31, 1976.

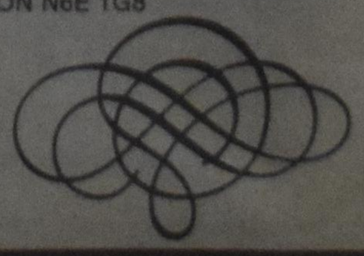
Dear mother of:

Herman & Ada Van Arnhem — Lambeth, Ont.
Mickey & John Kuindersma — Stratford, Ont.
Peter & Kathy Van Arnhem — Burlington, Ont.
Elly & Renier Scholten — Brantford, Ont.
Jerry & Jane Van Arnhem — Delaware, Ont.

Beloved Oma of 20 grandchildren and dear Oma-Oma of 14 great-grandchildren.

Funeral service was held on Sept. 8, 1992, at First Chr. Ref. Church, London, Ont., with the Rev. Wayne Brouwer and the Rev. Peter Hogeterp officiating.

Correspondence address: c/o Mrs. Lennie Lammers, 76 Antrim Cres., London, ON N6E 1G8



Classified/Events

Obituaries

Na een korte ziekte, en onverwachts, is in Jesus ontslapen onze lieve broer, zwager en oom,

NANKO VAN KAMPEN

op zaterdag, 29 aug. 1992, op de leeftijd van 69 jaar.

Hij zal erg gemist worden door ons allen.

S. Mollema
G. Mollema-Van Kampen
Siebrand, Frouwkje, Pieter, Gerrit
D. Van Kampen
D. Van Kampen-Linker
Janet, John, Anita

Correspondence address: D. Van Kampen, 100 Champlain Cr., London, ON N5V 1H1

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Teachers

DUNNVILLE, Ont.: Dunnville Chr. School invites applicants for a **temporary full-time position** in **Grade 1**, from January till June 1993. Please send resumes to:

Mr. R. VanEgmond,
Dunnville Chr. School
R.R.#1, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W1
Tel.: (416) 774-5142

GEORGETOWN, Ont.: Georgetown District Chr. School requires qualified **teacher/librarian, part-time** (25%). This position includes enrichment responsibilities.

Experience an asset. For information or application contact:

Treena Sybersma, Principal
R.R. #1, Georgetown, ON
L7G 4S4
Tel.: (416) 877-4221

JARVIS, Ont.: Jarvis District Chr. School will be in need of **two teachers due to maternity reasons**, to complete the 1992-93 school year. We will require a **Grade 2 teacher** effective Jan. 4, 1993, and a **Grade 3 teacher** effective Feb. 1, 1993. Please send your letter of application, resumes and references prior to Oct. 16, 1992, to:

Garry Glasbergen, Principal
Jarvis District Chr. School
P.O. Box 520
Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0

For further information please call the principal at **(519) 587-4444** (school) or **(519) 587-5374** (home).

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$8,260.00

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Events

40th Anniversary

The members of the **"Daughters of Priscilla" Ladies' Society of the First Chr. Ref. Church, Hamilton, Ont.**, cordially invite all former members to celebrate with them at their 40th anniversary dinner to be held on **Wednesday, Oct. 21, 1992.**

For reservation please forward $15 by cheque or money order to: **First CRC, 181 Charlton Ave. West, Hamilton, ON L8P 2C9.**

Please reply before October 7.

Events

1943 1993

50th Anniversary
of
Holland Marsh District Christian School,
Newmarket, Ontario

Sat. Feb. 13/93: 2 p.m. -
50th Anniversary Celebration Program in Holland Marsh CRC, followed by a coffee social.

Sun. Feb. 14/93: 3 p.m. -
A Service of Thanksgiving in Holland Marsh CRC, followed by a light luncheon.

H.M.D.C.S. is the oldest Christian School in Canada and if you have been a part of the school we welcome you to celebrate with us.

An anniversary book will be available for purchase.

ATTENTION!

Zion Chr. Ref. Church, Oshawa, Ont., will **not** be hosting a **Worship Conference** this fall due to a heavy schedule of activities.

Plan now to attend the next major Worship Conference planned for **October 22, 23, 1993.**

The **Music Group Productions Inc.** presents, in concert, two fine choral groups from the Netherlands

"JUBILATE DEO"
(Woudenberg)

and

"HET ZUIDERKOOR"
(Putten)

These two choirs have given many memorable combined performances in Holland, participating regularly in evangelism events. Notably they participated in the 25-year jubilee concert given in honour of the wedding anniversary of Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus in 1991.

In Canada, the combined choirs will consist of 120 plus singers, providing the best of both groups' repertoire, combined with some audience participation.

Conductors/organists are **Addie de Jong and Bert Koelewijn.** Soloists are: **Herman and Henk-Jan Drost** (trumpets); **Riet den Hartog** (soprano) and **Kees Alers** (flute). Concert dates and places:

Wednesday, Oct. 7, 8 p.m.
Dundas Street Centre United Church, London.

Friday, Oct. 9, 8 p.m.
Central Presb. Church, Hamilton

Saturday, Oct. 10, 8 p.m.
College Park 7th Day Adv. Church, Oshawa.

Monday, Oct. 12, 8 p.m.
St. George Anglican Church, Guelph.

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 8 p.m.
Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines.

Thursday, Oct. 15, 8 p.m.
Holland Christian Homes, Brampton

Regular tickets: $12.50 p.p. Advance tickets: $11.00 each. Seniors: $7.50 each. Available at Holland Christian Homes or The Music Group (416) 455-0797.

Events

Unique baler twine recycling project to benefit environment, Alberta farmers, the hungry, unemployed

EDMONTON, Alta. (MCC) — A unique recycling effort which will benefit Alberta farmers, hungry people in the developing world, unemployed Edmontonians and the environment has been launched by the Alberta office of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

The pilot project, which will recycle used baler twine into building materials, roofing tiles and patio blocks, will help deal with a "tremendous rural environmental problem," according to Dave Hubert, who directs MCC's job creation work in Canada. "Baler twine is almost indestructible," says Hubert, noting that the twine, which is used to bale hay, cannot be burned because it releases harmful propylene gases into the atmosphere. "It just gets used and then thrown away," he says of the 2.7 million kilograms of twine used each year by Alberta farmers.

Diverse uses

Baler twine brought to the pilot project will be ground up and made into steel reinforced posts, roofing tiles and patio blocks. Profits from the sales of the materials will be donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, an international food relief agency of which MCC is a partner.

Five former unemployment insurance recipients will be employed by the pilot project.

According to Hubert, the baler twine recycling idea came from Vauxhall-area farmers who, while praising MCC's support for recycling efforts in the city of Edmonton, wondered if the agency could also support similar efforts in rural areas.

Financial support for the pilot project is being provided by the federal government's Environmental Partners and Canadian Job Strategy programs, the Alberta Department of the Environment, Shell, Imperial Oil, Canadian National, Bridon Pacific Ltd., Peavey Industries Ltd. and Rocky Mountain Processing.

1967 September 22 1992

The **Bethel Chr. Ref. Church** of **Dunnville, Ont.** invites you to commemorate with us and with our Pastor

REV. RICHARD STIENSTRA

25 years

in the ministry of the CRC

This evening will be held, D.V., on **Friday, October 9, 1992, at 8 p.m., in the gym of the Dunnville Christian School** (corner Hwy. #3 & RobinsonRd.). For more information call **(416) 774-8229.**

Join us as we celebrate and acknowledge the Lord's faithfulness.

Help Wanted

Grand Rapids Christian Schools

Superintendent

The Grand Rapids Christian School Association is seeking God's guidance in finding a person with the necessary educational qualifications.*

- Whose profession and lifestyle are distinctively Christian, and perspective Reformed.
- Whose strong communication skills will enhance dialogue and interaction with community and school constituency.
- Whose knowledge, experience, and expertise will guide the Association schools to greater educational excellence.
- Whose vision and leadership skills will give strong, innovative direction to all Association activities, schools, and personnel.
- Whose vision for and commitment to God's multicultural kingdom will be reflected in staff, board, and student body of this large urban Christian school system.

If such a position excites you, please send your letter of inquiry and resumé to:

Mr. John VanderPloeg
3635 Twenty Ninth Street SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49512

Application deadline is October 15, 1992
**Minimum of earned masters degree. Possession of or eligibility for Michigan Administrative certification*
G.R.C.S.A. encourages applications without regard to ethnicity, gender, or disability

Experienced herdsperson for 55-cow milking herd with milking parlour and free stalls. References required.
Call John Wiersma at (519) 523-9241.

Last week's puzzle

A	L	I	T			A	S	K	S		A	L	O	E
B	I	K	E	R		S	H	I	N		L	A	D	E
E	M	O	T	E		I	O	T	A		O	R	E	L
L	O	N	E	S	T	A	R	S	T		N	E	T	S
			E	R	N	E		C	R	E	S	S		
R	I	A	L	T	O			R	H	E	A			
A	N	N	O		Y	O	Y	O		A	G	A	P	E
S	C	A	N	T		D	E	O		R	A	P	I	D
H	A	T	E	R		D	A	D	A		I	O	N	E
		S	I	B	S			G	E	N	D	E	R	
	A	R	O	M	A		S	P	A	R				
E	D	A	M		L	O	N	E	R	A	N	G	E	R
B	O	D	E		S	L	A	T		S	E	R	A	I
B	R	A	M		A	E	R	I		E	X	E	R	T
S	E	R	E		M	O	L	T			T	Y	P	E

Crossword puzzle returns next week

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Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Address change
— Rev. John Boonstra, 430 Madsen Road, Kelowna, BC V1X 2C2

Change in worship time
— The Ingersoll, Ont., CRC is now holding its Sunday services at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.

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Calendar of Events

Sept. 26	Redeemer College Alumni Association meeting at 9 a.m. followed by 10th anniversary celebration from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., open house from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., annual membership meeting at 2:30 p.m., and an open program at 8:30 p.m. All events at RC, **Ancaster**, Ont.	**Oct. 17-22**	Mini-concert tour by Willem Van Suydam (organ), The Drost Brothers (trumpets), and Bert Koelewijn (piano). All events at 8 p.m. **Oct. 17**: West End CRC, **Edmonton**, Alta.; **Oct 19**: Can. Ref. Church, **Neerlandia**, Alta.; **Oct. 21**: Can. Ref. Church, **Carmen**, Man.; **Oct. 22**: Grace Anglican Church, **Brantford**, Ont.
Sept. 26	Concert by Kenny Marks, 8 p.m., CRC, **Drayton**, Ont. Info line (519) 848-3706.	**Oct. 17**	Annual meeting of the All Ont. Diaconal Conference at John Knox Chr. School, **Brampton**, Ont. Join over 400 in a day of fellowship & training. Choose from 16 workshops and 15 seminars to help you grow in a ministry of mercy in Christ's name. Call (416) 646-4511 for a registration form.
Sept. 27	Celebration and Praise Service for Redeemer's 10th anniversary, at 11 a.m., RC auditorium, **Ancaster**, Ont. Service will be led by Ancaster Fellowship CRC on the theme: "Praise the Lord and forget not all his benefits." Everyone welcome!	**Oct. 22-23**	"Heart to Heart; Nation to Nation," a special CPJ event celebrating the work of John Olthuis, former CPJ researcher and currently active as an aboriginal rights lawyer. **Oct. 22**: First CRC, **Langley**, B.C.; **Oct. 23**: Emmanuel CRC, **Calgary**, Alta; **Oct. 24**: Chr. High School, **Edmonton**, Alta. Watch local announcements!
Sept. 27	City-wide hymnsing, 8 p.m. First CRC, **Sarnia**, Ont.		
Sept. 28	World Home Bible League multi-media presentation "Where Jesus Walked," 8 p.m., First CRC, **Guelph**, Ont.		
Sept. 28	"Serving Christ in the Nineties" is sponsoring an evening conference for reflection by Christians on our environmental crisis. From 7:30 - 10:00 p.m. Rehoboth-Fellowship CRC, **Etobicoke**, Ont. Info line (416) 979-2443.	**Oct. 23-Nov. 7**	World Home Bible League multi-media presentation "More than a Song," **Oct. 23**: 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Cambridge**, Ont; **Oct. 27**: 7:30 p.m. CRC, **Burlington**, Ont.; **Oct. 28**: 7:30 p.m. Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton**, Ont.; **Oct 29**: 8 p.m., CRC, **Tillsonburg**, Ont.; **Oct. 30**: Bethel CRC, **Dunnville**, Ont; **Nov. 7**: 7:30 p.m. Providence CRC, **Beamsville**, Ont.
Sept. 29	CCBF's 6th annual golf tournament and B.B.Q. Proceeds for "Beginnings." At Knollwood Golf **Ancaster**, Ont. B.B.Q. at Redeemer College. For info. call (416) 524-1203. Rain date: Oct. 1	**Oct. 24**	"Reclaiming our Heritage," Province-wide rally of the Chr. Heritage Party, 4:30-8:00 p.m., Polish Canadian Cultural Centre, **Calgary**, Alta. For info. call (403) 252-3673.
Sept. 29 - Oct. 3	Teake van der Meer, well-known Frisian comedian, visits Canada! **Sept. 29**: Knox Chr. School, **Bowmanville**, Ont.; **Sept. 30**: Adelaide McDonald School, **Strathroy**, Ont; **Oct. 2**: Vineland Public School, **Vineland**, Ont.; **Oct. 3**: Jarvis District Chr. School, **Jarvis**, Ont. All evenings start at 8 p.m. For info call (519) 587-2162.	**Oct. 24-25**	40th anniversary celebrations of Rehoboth CRC, **Niagara Falls**, Ont. Info. line (416) 358-7200.
Oct. 3	Concert by organist Ian Sadler and soprano Catherine Henry, 8 p.m. Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby**, Ont.	**Oct. 30**	Ninth annual Senior Citizen's Day, Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Speaker: Dr. Justin Cooper (9:30 a.m.). Choir and organ in the afternoon. To register, call (416) 648-2131.
Oct. 7-15	"Jubilate Deo" and "Het Zuiderkoor," two well-known choirs from Holland, present combined concerts in Ontario. All events start 8 p.m. **Oct 7**: Dundas St. Centre United Church, **London; Oct. 9**: Central Presb. Church, **Hamilton Oct. 10**: College Park 7th-Day Adv. Church, **Oshawa; Oct. 12**: St. George Anglican Church, **Guelph; Oct. 14**: Maranatha CRC, **St. Catharines; Oct. 15**: Holland Chr. Homes, **Brampton.**	**Oct. 30-31**	Third annual "Toronto Conference on Reformed Theology," Bayview Glen Church, **Toronto**, Ont. Speakers: Mariano Di Gangi, John H. Gerstner and Ronald D. Gleason. For info. call (416) 477-2266.
Oct 7-17	Organ/trumpet recitals by Andre Knevel and the Brouwer brothers. All events at 8 p.m. **Oct. 7**: CRC, **Chilliwack**, B.C.; **Oct. 9**: Maranatha Can. Ref. Church, **Surrey**, B.C.; **Oct. 10**: Can. Ref. Church, **Abbotsford**, B.C.; **Oct. 13**: Emmanuel CRC, **Calgary**, Alta.; **Oct. 14**: South Minster United Church, **Lethbridge**, Alta.; **Oct. 16**: CRC, **Chilliwack**, B.C., **Oct. 17**: Trinity CRC, **Clearbrook**, B.C.	**Oct. 31**	Seventh annual all-Ontario Holy Spirit conference, Kennedy Rd. Tabernacle, **Brampton**, Ont. For info. call (416) 278-7969.
		Oct. 31	Reunion "Andijker Christelijke Scholen." For info. call Joe Doef, **Lacombe**, Alta. Phone (403) 782-2704, fax (403) 782-2085.
Oct. 7	Fall rally of the Can. Fed. of CRC Women (Wyoming Region), 10 a.m., First CRC, **Sarnia**, Ont. Speakers: Carol Kent and Rev. John Van Til	**Oct. 31**	Meeting of "Christian Rainbows" (family/friends of the long-term mentally ill), 10-3 p.m., CRC, **Ingersoll**, Ont. Speaker: Jerry Van Spronsen. Info. lines (416) 639-1075 and (519) 631-0307.
Oct. 9-11	40th anniversary celebration of First CRC of **New Westminster**, B.C. Info. line (604) 521-0111.	**Nov. 2-14**	CSS's Harry Houtman plans to be in **Alberta**.
Oct. 10-11	40th anniversary of the Reformed Church, **Drayton**, Ont.	**Nov. 6**	"Back to God Hour" rally, 8 p.m., CRC, **Aylmer**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Dave Feddes. Special music.
Oct. 13-30	CSS's Adriana Pierik will be in the **Lower Fraser Valley**, B.C.	**Nov. 7**	"Back to God Hour" rally, 8 p.m., St. George's Anglican Church, **Guelph**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Dave Feddes. Special music by OCMA and Andre Knevel.
Oct. 16-18	M2/W2 10th anniversary celebrations at Lendrum MB church, **Edmonton**, Alta. Also at Dalhousie MB Comm. Church, **Calgary**, Alta., and Community Hall, **Duchess**, Alta. Speaker: Vicky Dyck	**Nov. 7**	Organ/Panflute concert by Sander van Marion and Matthys Koene, 8:15 p.m., Christ Church Cathedral, **Hamilton**, Ont. Tickets: (416) 648-6585/3170.
Oct. 16	Inauguration and public address of Dr. Bert F. Polman, 8 p.m. Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Reception follows.	**Nov. 13**	"Christian Festival Concert" by the choirs and brass of the OCMA, Leendert Kooij directing, at 8 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto**, Ont. Guest artists: Ellen van Haaren, Sander van Marion and Andre Knevel. For tickets call (416) 636-9779.

News

Conference discusses ministry needs of seafarers

Photo: C.C. files

Some of the international trade carried on by cargo freighters such as these exploits crew members from poor Third World countries.

Bill Fledderus

PHILADELPHIA—Commercial shipping from poorer countries throughout the world continues to oppress and exploit its workers, according to a recent five-day conference on ministry to seafarers.

The conference, which involved about 175 participants, was held by the North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA), a 60-year-old umbrella organization.

"Many crews are not unionized and operate in virtually unregulated working conditions," explains Barend Biesheuvel, a member of the NAMMA board and acting director of the Montreal Seafarer's Centre, one of three such ministries operated by the Christian Reformed Church.

Filipino crews disadvantaged

"For example," says Biesheuvel, "you might have a ship that flies the flag of Liberia or some other country too small to regulate it properly. Let's say it's owned by a bank in Switzerland or some financiers from Hong Kong. The officers are British, German, Norwegian, Dutch—whatever—and the rest are Polish. Then you've got a crew of Filipinos."

Biesheuvel says this common situation, which can also involve problems in communication between the different language groups, makes it easy for the Filipino crewmen to be exploited and even mistreated.

"They can be made to work seven days a week for nine months straight," he says, "and whether they get overtime pay or not is often unsure. Sometimes, in the worst cases, the crews aren't given enough fresh water or food, or maybe they cannot get fresh bedding, or they can even be physically abused by the officers."

Filipino seamen make up the largest national group employed in merchant shipping in the world, and the NAMMA conference held a special panel discussion to focus on ministering to them.

"I know of a few [Filipino crewmen] who even agree to operate under a double contract," says Biesheuvel. "Whenever inspectors come aboard the ship, they show them a contract [which satisfies the minimum pay requirements and the like]. But in fact they also have another contract which shows they are paid much less. They are just glad to have a job, so they agree to the deception."

Despite the injustice which apparently exists on such ships, pastors and other Christians who minister to seafarers have to be careful about becoming known as whistle-blowers, says Biesheuvel.

"There is often little we can do in cases where there is no available evidence. We cannot afford to lose our welcome on board the ships," he says.

Conference 'a real boost'

The NAMMA conference also focused on developing Bible studies aboard ships and on the legal rights of seamen.

Some speakers at the conference warned that the collapse of communist states means that a great number of seamen from former Soviet and East European states will be working without much governmental protection and be in danger of mistreatment.

"These conferences have been held annually for the past ten years," says Biesheuvel, "and they can be very encouraging. The ecumenical worship sessions are always very interesting, as the organizers try to incorporate the various worship styles of the different Christian traditions."

"Many port ministries operate more or less on their own, and contact between different ministries is welcome," he says. There are more than 150 ports in North America, and Christian seamen's clubs exist in most of them. The majority operate under the auspices of the Roman Catholic church, and another large group are affiliated with the Anglican Church.

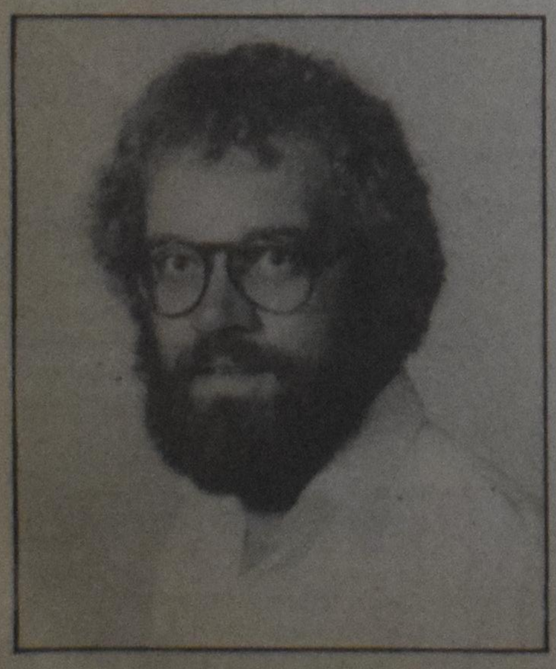

Photo: C.C. files

Barend Biesheuvel is the acting director of the Montreal Seafarers Centre.

News Digest

Bill Fledderus, column editor

Banner year for schoolbook censors

WASHINGTON—The number of attempts to censor books in American schools rose 50 per cent during the 1991-1992 academic year, according to People for the American Way, a liberal watchdog group. Forty per cent of the attempts succeeded, making it the worst year on record. Among the offending books, reports *Newsweek* magazine, are *The Grapes of Wrath, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, A Separate Peace* and Maurice Sendak's *In the Night Kitchen*, for its illustration of a naked boy.

GM C-K trucks 'more deadly than Pintos'

WASHINGTON—Faulty fuel tanks in some General Motors trucks have caused 10 times as many deaths as the Ford Pinto, according to the Centre for Auto Safety (CAS), a non-profit group. The allegedly dangerous gas tanks are vulnerable to fires and explosions in side-impact crashes. The group estimates that 300 people have died in side crash fires since 1973, while the infamous Ford Pinto caused only 27 deaths in the 1970s.

Last month, CAS petitioned the U.S. highway safety administration to recall five million trucks, including all 1973-1987 Chevrolet and GMC C-K series full sized pickups, which have the allegedly dangerous "side-saddle" tanks, mounted outside the frame rails.

Churches tend to equate their authority with God's will, scholar warned

Erich Weingartner

WATERLOO, Ont.—Erich Weingartner, a freelance writer from North Bay, Ont., published an article in the September issue of Canada Lutheran *in which he reminisced about some of the teachings of his "intellectual father," the late Aarne Siirala of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.*

Siirala, a world-class expert on Martin Luther, died in May 1991. His loss is still felt by his family, friends and students, writes Weingartner, who then goes on to talk about some of Siirala's ideas.

We cannot gain knowledge until we allow ourselves to become vulnerable, Siirala used to say. Genuine knowledge cannot be found in books, or dogmas or confessions. Truth cannot be the possession of individuals or of institutions. Knowledge and truth are personal—or rather *inter*-personal. They can only be found within the community of faith—an open, inclusive, interdependent community; a community committed to love and justice, to reconciliation and healing.

The Lutheran church hasn't always been accepting of Siirala's wisdom and contribution. His Luther research and his life experience convinced him that there is a demonic element in all institutions. Structures are created by communities to express their identity and to perform common tasks. But the power which structures accumulate ends up defining the community. Institutions soon decide who is in and who is out, who is right and who is wrong, who is healthy and who is sick.

Churches do not escape what he called the "pathology of institutions." What makes church institutions even worse than secular ones is that they tend to equate their own authority with the will of God.

As Siirala often explained, Luther was not merely concerned about his church's moral excesses. In his response to Erasmus, Luther thanked him for not wearying him "with those extraneous issues about the papacy, purgatory, indulgences and the like—trifles rather than issues..." What Luther attacked in the Roman Catholic Church of his day was its central claim to be the ultimate authority in the interpretation of truth.

When Lutherans of our day use the authority of their office—or of the Augsburg Confessions—as a sledgehammer to enforce conformity within the church, they are violating the very heart of the Reformation.

I see Aarne Siirala at work on the blackboard of a seminary classrom. With long strokes of the chalk he sketches two images of the church of Christ. The first is an institutional concept, he explains. He draws a circle around what looks like a child's drawing of a house, topped with a cross.

It is a closed concept, like an exclusive club. God and Christ are imprisoned within. In order to have access to salvation, you have to become a member of the club. You have to memorize the right formula, follow the right rituals, sing the right songs. This is a church that defines itself by excluding those who do not fit a preconceived mold. It is a church of law, because a judgement is necessary to determine whether someone has met the criteria for membership.

The other image of the church, a criss-cross pattern, is as open as God's creation. It acknowledges that God cannot be contained within an institution. Salvation is not determined by formulas or obtained by the effort of our will, but by the grace of God. Salvation takes place in "*the web of life*"—one of Siirala's favourite phrases. This is the church of the gospel, because it is freely available to all.

He faces the board and chalks crosses at various intersections of his grid. When he turns back to his class he speaks slowly, to make sure not a word is missed by his students. There is fire in his eyes.

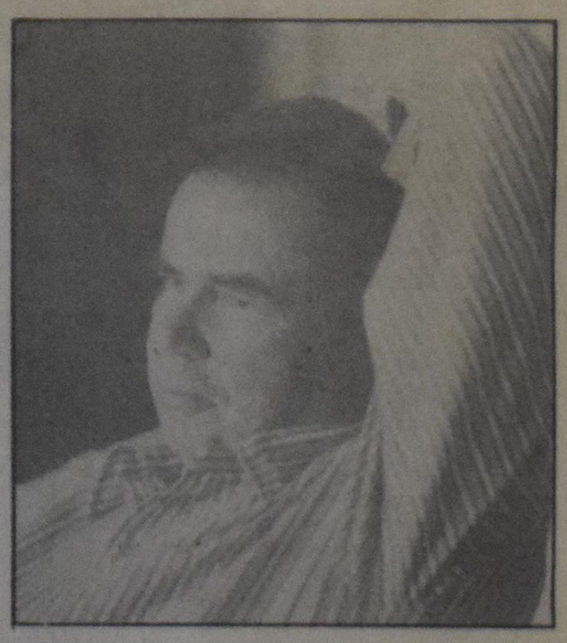

Photo courtesy Erich Wiengartner

The late Aarne Siirala argued that salvation comes by grace, not by the church.

Salvation takes place wherever Christ is crucified. The church is the community of the cross. Resurrection belongs to those who are excluded and persecuted, those who are ill and afflicted, those who suffer and die.

Luther, as Aarne Siirala never tired of telling us, called this "*theologia crucis*," the theology of the cross. Luther maintained that "afflictions, crosses and death are the most precious treasures of all." The theology of the cross means that we should plunge ourselves into the matrix of actual human experiences and trust that *that* is where we will find the meaning of God's will.

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